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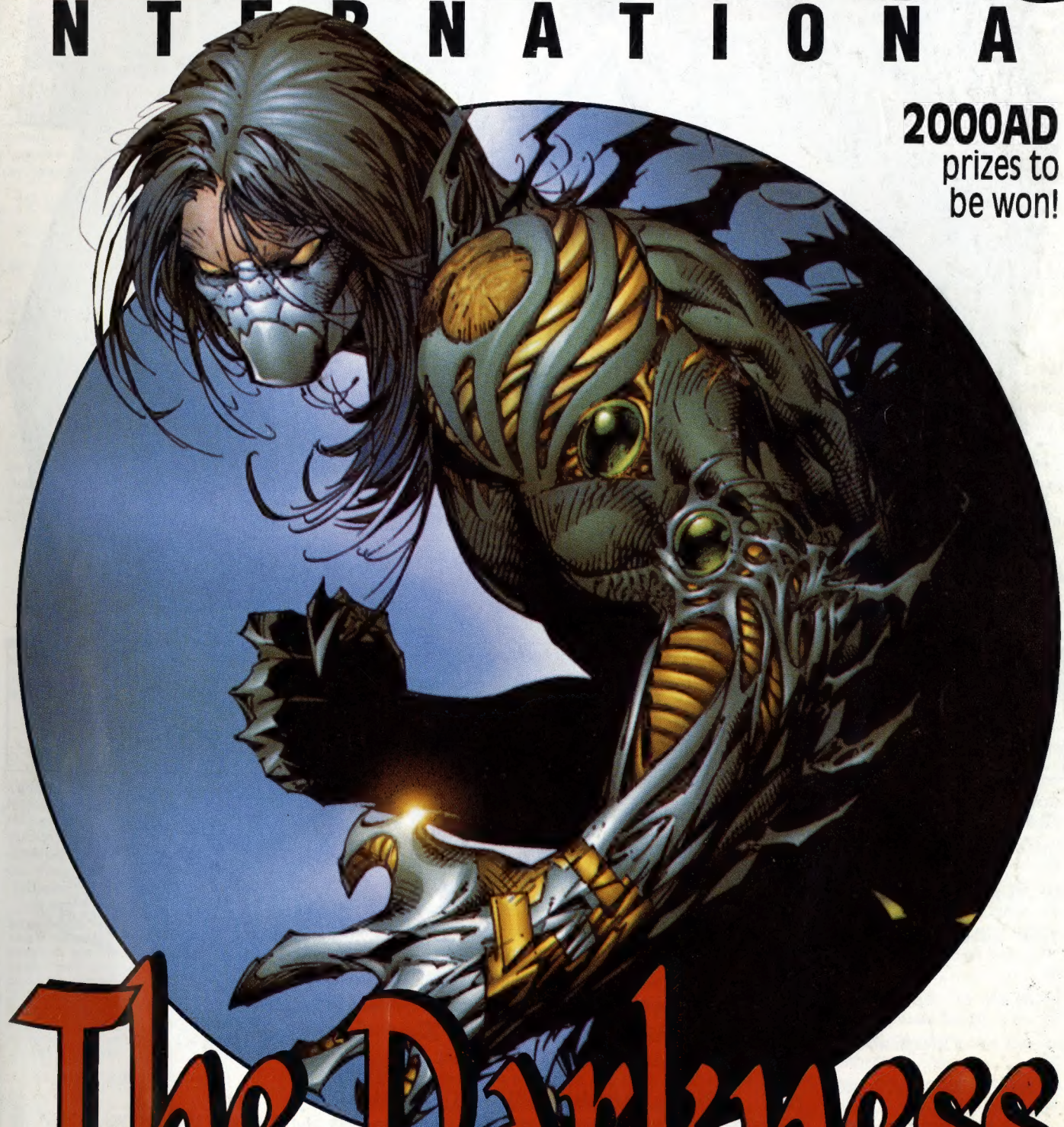

The Darkness

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No. 89 95p/US: $2.35 (Can: $3.00) CHRISTMAS 1997

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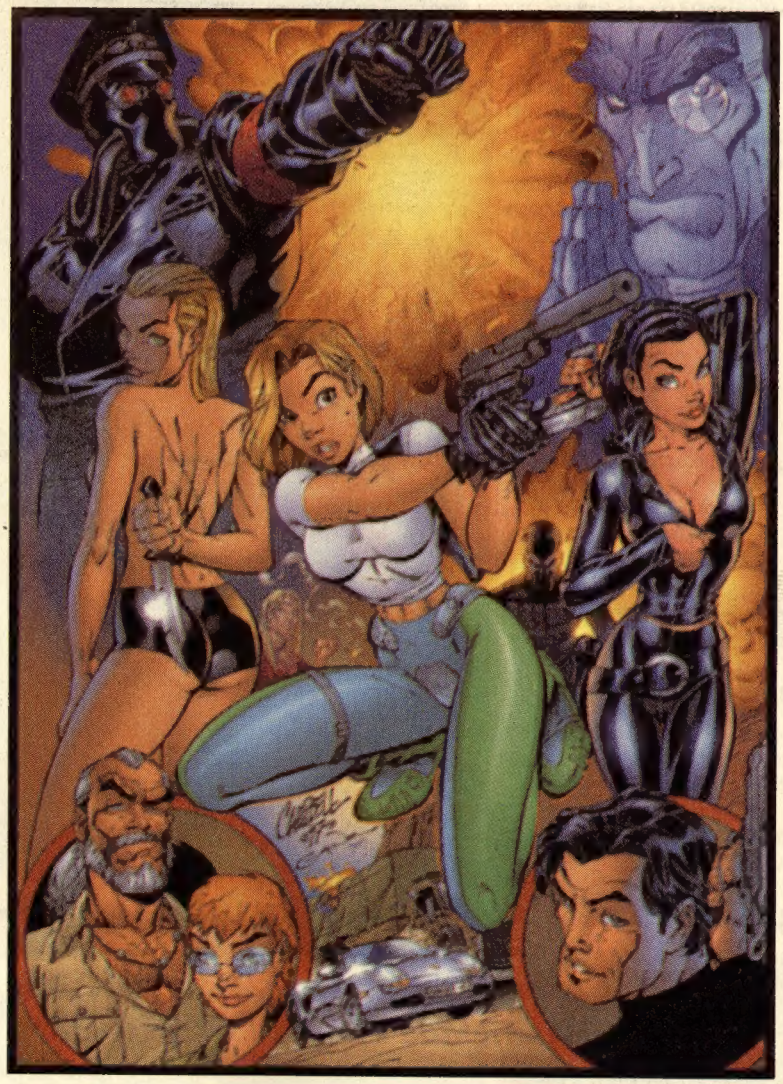
NEWS AMERICA



*THREE top comics creators have linked to form a new creator-owned Image imprint. Ex-**Gen**[13] artist J. Scott Campbell, former **Uncanny X-Men** penciller Joe Madureira and Humberto (**Impulse**) Ramos are creating Cliffhanger Productions.*

Under the wing of Jim Lee's WildStorm Productions, this new imprint will be publishing three titles:

***DANGER GIRL** (shown left) is Campbell's new all-female secret agent team title launching in March. Previously announced as a WildStorm: New Horizons title, its **Gen**[13] #25 and **DV8** #14 previews will still ship as planned.*

***BATTLE CHASERS** will follow in April. Creator Madureira, who rocketed to fame with his three-year run on Marvel's **Uncanny X-Men**, describes it as "a story of epic proportions as heroes battle steam-powered robots and airships".*

***CRIMSON**, the Ramos "vampire story with a twist", is set for a May launch, and is written by his ex-**Impulse** partner Brian Augustyn.*

Jim Lee said of the titles, "Fans and retailers have been clamouring for something new and exciting to help revitalize the industry. I think Cliffhanger is it."

INSIDE THIS ISSUE...

COVER ***THE DARKNESS*** (visual, from #8 variant, by Marc Silverstri and Batt) celebrates top spot in the December retail order charts with its 11th issue. Co-authors Garth Ennis and Mal Coney speak out on page 8.

NEWS ***NEWS AMERICA:*** Claremont and Waid join Marvel ...New **Wonder Woman** graphic novel...**Vampirella/Painkiller Jane** one-shot... Marvel's **Star Trek/X-Men** sequel... Awesome revives **Youngblood**. 3

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IN BRIEF

More Xena from Topps

DEBUTING in February is **Xena: Warrior Princess: Callisto**, the fourth mini-series from Topps Comics to feature the highly successful spin-off from the live-action *Hercules* TV series.

Written by Roy Thomas, best known for his work on **Conan the Barbarian**, this new three-part series is drawn by Tom (**Punisher 2099**) Morgan and **Lost World: Jurassic Park**'s Steve Montano.

As with all of Topps' earlier **Xena** comics, this new series will be published in two editions, offering a choice of an artwork or TV photo cover. For **Xena: Warrior Princess: Callisto,** Jim (**Rascals in Paradise**) Silke will be providing the artwork cover to the first issue.

Also available from Topps in February will be the 80-page **Xena: Warrior Princess** trade paperback. Reprinted is the first **Xena** mini-series (two issues by Thomas and Joyce Chin), plus **Xena: Warrior Princess** #0 by Aaron Lopresti, and a story by Robert (Salmoneus) Trebor..

***Xena: Warrior Princess: Callisto** #1, priced $2.95, and **Xena Warrior Princess** trade paperback, priced $9.95, ship in February.*

Wolverine's adamantium set to return

ACCORDING to X-office insiders, Wolverine's adamantium skeleton will return in the summer in a major storyline that will involve heavy tie-ins with the other X-titles.

This rumoured crossover is – apparently – the reason why current writer Warren Ellis decided not to extend his tenure on **Wolverine** beyond the initial four issues.

The end of Sovereign Seven

DC COMICS has announced the cancellation of Chris Claremont's creator-owned **Sovereign Seven** title as of the May-shipping issue #36.

Lenore – creepy but dead cute

PREMIERING in February from Dan Vado's Slave Labor Graphics is **Lenore**, a series that looks at everyday life through the eyes of a cute little dead girl.

It is written and drawn by newcomer Roman Dirge who utilises a computer-enhanced art style in his work.

Jhonen Vasquez's **Squee** #4 will preview Dirge's series with a one-page *Lenore* strip. Like **Lenore**, Slave Labor's **Squee** is a 24-page black and white comic.

***Lenore** #1 and **Squee** #4, both priced $2.95, ship in February.*

Buffy's vampire slaying at Dark Horse

IN EARLY November Dark Horse acquired the rights to publish comics based on the *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* TV series.

The company plans to launch with a three to four issue series debuting in May. No writer has yet been aassigned, although Dark Horse has announced that it will be illustrated by **Vertigo Vérité: Girl**'s Duncan Fegredo.

A second mini-series – to be written by **Skeleton Key**'s Andi Watson – is being planned for October.

The *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* TV show is a spin-off from the 1992 movie of the same name which starred Donald Sutherland, Rutger Hauer and Kristy Swanson in the title role as the high school valley girl hero.

Elseworlds Thrillkiller sequel

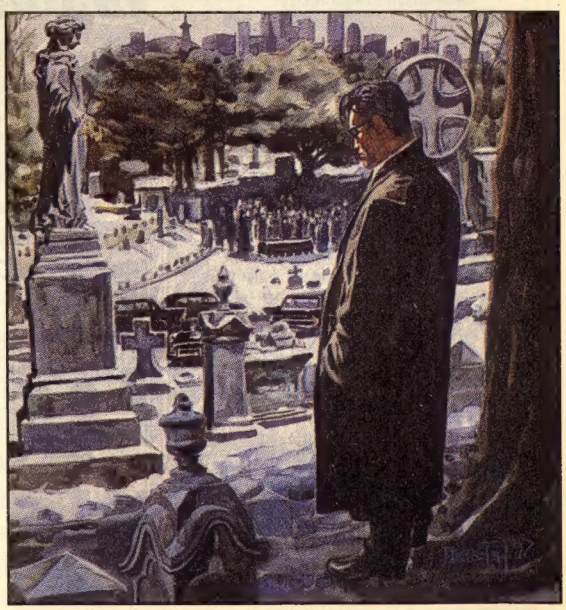
Writer Howard Chaykin and artist Dan Brereton reunite for a one-shot follow-up to their DC Elseworlds mini-series

HOWARD (**Cyberella**) Chaykin and Dan (**The Nocturnals**) Brereton are back with a sequel to their spring 1997 three-issue **Thrillkiller** series.

Titled **Thrillkillers '62,** this $4.95 DC prestige format one-shot is written by Chaykin and fully painted by Brereton. A 48-page *Elseworlds* story shipping in February, it is set a year after Dick (Robin) Grayson was killed by the female Joker.

Since Grayson's death, Commissioner Gordon, Batgirl, Batman and the mysterious Black Canary have eradicated the threat of organised crime from Gotham but now the Joker has returned.

Married to the newly elected governor, the Joker adopts a new criminal identity and enlists the aid of Killer Croc and a Nazi scientist to bring a fresh wave of crime to the city.



Batgirl desires revenge for Grayson's death. She now has the opportunity but Batman fears her obsession could lead to a fatal ending for their partnership.

Marvel moves to capitalise on Blade movie premiere

TO COINCIDE with the February premiere of the Wesley Snipes *Blade* movie, Marvel is launching a new series featuring the film's title character.

An addition to Marvel's *Strange Tales* line, **Blade** will be a continuing title written by Don McGregor, best known for his 1970s Marvel work on the Black Panther in **Jungle Action** and Killraven in **Amazing Adventures**.

Art will be provided by Brian (**Journey into Mystery**) Hagan and newcomer Sandu Flores.

Marvel is also publishing **Blade: Crescent City Blues**. A 48-page one-shot written by Chris (**Shi: Nightstalkers**) Golden, it features the vampire responsible for Blade's origin.

Art is by 1950s Marvel veteran Gene Colan – who pencilled Blade's first appearance in **Tomb of Dracula** #10 [1973] – and **Death: The Time of Your Life**'s Mark Pennington.

In related news, New Line Cinema has announced that the opening of the *Blade* movie has been rescheduled from February 13 to August 7. Any effect this may have on Marvel's launch dates for its new **Blade** comics was unknown at presstime.

Blade: Crescent City Blues, priced $3.50, ships on January 28. Blade #1, priced $2.99, ships on February 11.

ABOVE: Too late for Christmas but ideal birthday presents for computer-owning comic fans, three mouse mats, the first spin-offs from DC's October "Faces of the DC Universe" cover promotion. Retailing at $15.95, these 8x9½" mats ship on March 18. They will be followed on March 25 by a $15.95 set of 12 full colour postcards including the above three images. A second set of mats is planned by DC which is considering further "Faces of the DC Universe" spin-offs.

Vampirella/Painkiller Jane team-up

PUBLISHERS Harris and Event are combining for a one-shot special featuring Harris's Vampirella and Event's Painkiller Jane.

Titled simply **Vampirella/Painkiller Jane**, the comic will be written by Mark Waid and Brian Augustyn, the first time either of the **Painkiller Jane** co-writers has worked for Harris.

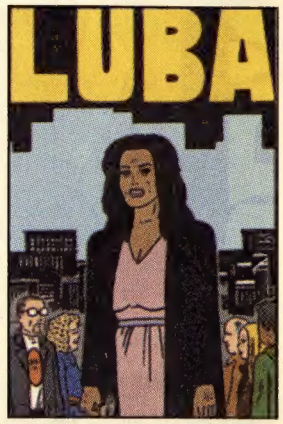
When approached for further information, Augustyn told **Comics International**, "We've only just agreed to this, so there aren't a lot of details available yet."

However, he went on to say, "Waid and I are co-plotting. **Pain Killer Jane**'s regular art-genius, Rick Leonardi is drawing. Jimmy Palmiotti is inking. As I understand it, Joe Quesada will be doing two different covers.

"The one-shot story will take place in New York, and will have the two women meeting while each is investigating a vampire cult in the city that never sleeps," Augustyn concluded.

The project is currently scheduled for publication in May and, following the April-shipping issue #6, Harris will put **Vampirella** on a one month hiatus to make room on the schedules for the special title.

Love & Rockets spin-off



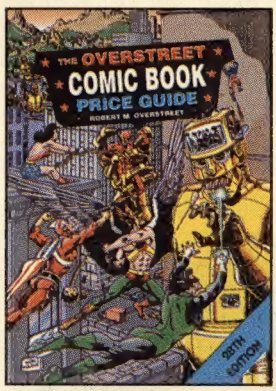
TO BE published three times a year by Fantagraphics, Gilbert Hernandez's **Luba** is a black and white series continuing the story of one of his **Love & Rockets** characters.

Said Hernandez, "I feel most truthful when I tell Luba's stories. I tend to think more seriously about her personality than I do any of my other characters, which is why I've returned to her, although with a brand new start."

Priced $2.95, each 24-page issue will include a main story of the title character who has now relocated to America.

Back-ups feature spin-offs from the main narrative and spotlight members of Luba's family.

Luba #1, priced $2.95, ships in February.



*LEFT: Murphy Anderson's artwork for the Justice League of America cover to **The Overstreet Comic Book Price Guide** for 1998.*

To be published by Gemstone in April, this 28th edition of "the bible" of comic collecting will also be available with an Anderson cover featuring the old Quality Comics heroes. As usual, the guide will be published in both hardcover ($24) and softcover ($18) versions.

*Above: Ray Lago's painted art for **Shi: Masquerade**, a $3.50 one-shot addition to Crusade's Fine Arts line. It tells of Shi confronting an urban vigilante who could be a demon from Hell in a story by **Waterworld** co-adapters Christopher Golden and Tom Sniegoski. **Shi: Masquerade** ships on February 25.*

Wolfman, Colan and Dracula: together again

WRITER Marv Wolfman has joined up with his old **Tomb of Dracula** collaborator, artist Gene Colan, for a three-part Dracula story for Dark Horse Comics, he recently told **Comics International**.

Shawna Ervin-Gore, Dark Horse's newly-installed publicity co-ordinator provided details: "Essentially the new series will be reprising the old Marvel title **The Tomb of Dracula**, which Marv and Gene of course worked on together in the '70s and early '80s. Since we can't use characters Marvel still owns, a new cast of supporting characters is being developed."

"Unlike most vampire genre titles out now which take an internal look at the world of vampires, these books focus on a team of vampire hunters, and the only vampire involved, really, is Dracula himself," she added. "There is, however, an emphasis on Dracula as a sympathetic/humanistic character."

Tentatively scheduled for a summer release, the series will be geared more toward an "R" rating than the previous Marvel series. Said Ervin-Gore, "Readers can expect a little more blood and gore following the Dark Horse tradition."

As a team, Wolfman and Colan are probably best-known for their acclaimed 70-issue run on Marvel's **Tomb of Dracula** [1972-79] although they also co-created **The Night Force** for DC Comics [1982].

In 1991, the pair revived **The Tomb of Dracula** as a four-part Epic series for Marvel's adult imprint.

ABOVE: Louis Small Jr and Rob Stull's artwork for the three-part Holy War, beginning in the $2.95 ***Vampirella*** *#4, shipping in February. "Mark Millar and I are going to be giving Vampirella an edgy spy gloss – kind of turning her into La Femme Nikita with fangs," announced series co-writer Grant Morrison.*

ABOVE: Artwork by former ***Daredevil*** *penciller Cary Nord for Marvel's March-shipping* ***Star Trek: The Next Generation/X-Men: Second Contact****. Written by Dan Abnett and Ian Edgington – co-writers of* ***Star Trek: Early Voyages*** *– this one-shot takes place immediately after the Star Trek: First Contact movie when a temporal disruption brings the crew of the USS Enterprise and the X-Men team together to thwart longtime Avengers foe Kang the Conqueror.*

Awesome's new Youngblood

The title that launched Image Comics follows creator Rob Liefeld to its fourth publisher since its 1987 debut

AWESOME Entertainment is reviving Rob Liefeld's **Youngblood** to be its flagship title.

Debuting in February, this latest incarnation will be written by **Supreme**'s Alan Moore and drawn by **Amazing Spider-Man** ex-penciller Steve Skroce.

The first issue will introduce six new members to the team and ship with eight alternate covers. Each cover, by a different artist, will spotlight a member of the team.

The new characters joining Shaft (pictured right) and the other – as yet unnamed – original team member are Doc Rocket, Johnny Panic, Suprema, Big Brother and Twilight.

Skroce and Liefeld, together with Jae Lee, Ian Churchill and Jeff Matsuda are among the artists scheduled to draw the cover variants.

Created by Liefeld, the Youngblood team first appeared in **Megaton Explosion** #1 [1987] before **Youngblood** became the first Image comic in 1992, achieving record issue one sales in excess of 300,000.

Youngblood #1, priced $2.50, ships in February.

Golden Age Jungle Queen revived

CONTINUING the expansion of its heroine-led line, London Night Studios – the publisher of **Razor** and **Poizon** – has acquired the comic book rights to **Sheena, Queen of the Jungle**.

Created by Will Eisner under the pen name of W. Morgan Thomas, this female Tarzan made her debut in Fiction House's **Jumbo** #1 [1938]. She starred in all 167 issues of **Jumbo** [through to 1953] as well as in 18 issues of her own title [1942-53].

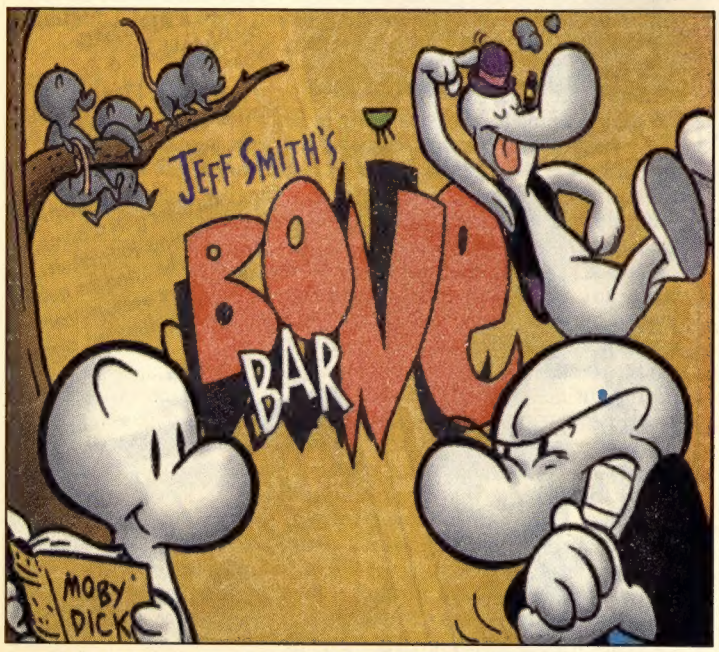
Spin-offs included a 1955 TV show starring Irish McCalla and a 1984 movie with Tanya Roberts in the title role. A two-part movie adaptation was published by Marvel.

London Night will launch its own **Sheena, Queen of the Jungle** series with a #0 issue in which she strives to prevent mega-rich developers from destroying her rain forest.

Illustrated by Wilson and written by European novelist Gabriel Cain making his comics debut, it will be available with a regular cover and three different animal skin-effect covers: zebra, leopard and alligator.

The skin-covered editions are each limited to 3,000 copies.

Sheena: Queen of the Jungle #0, priced £3.00 (regular) or $5.00 (animal skin) ships in February.



*ABOVE: Jeff Smith's artwork for the Bone chocolate boxes, the latest in a line of comics-related confectionery from Kitchen Sink Press. Each box contains 15 bars of chocolate, five each of three flavours – milk chocolate, chocolate with crispy rice and chocolate with nuts – with the wrappers depicting Fone Bone, Smiley Bone and Phoney Bone. Available in February, the boxes of chocolate retail at $30.00 each although any **Bone** fans needing to watch their weight can purchase an empty box for only $10.00. Launched as a self-published title in 1992, Smith's **Bone** has now passed its 30th issue.*

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Top Cow tops US sales charts with The Darkness

RECHARGING the industry in the middle of a slump in US sales, the Top Ten charts have featured a battleground of activity over recent months, with traditional leaders **Spawn** and **Uncanny X-Men** losing ground to revamped concepts. Now, in the wake of the relaunched **Fantastic Four** and **Captain America** taking top places for November, Top Cow's **The Darkness** has stunned the industry as it steals away the coveted top spot for December. To herald the return of the series' original writer, **Preacher**'s Garth Ennis, Top Cow Productions has commissioned 11 variant covers for this 11th issue, to staggering effect.

Coupled with the new writing team, this move by the Marc Silvestri Image studio has boosted the already successful comic from the ninth most popular title with retailers to the number one spot.

Comics International asked the two writers about their instant top seller.

Garth Ennis on THE DARKNESS

I'D WRITTEN **Medieval Spawn/Witchblade** for Marc Silvestri and he came back to me afterwards and wanted me to do a new book. I said fine and they sent me the basic idea of The Darkness, of the power itself. It was a kind of evil Green Lantern idea – but making things out of black shit instead of green shit. The idea was supposed to be that the guy would be a total shit, but by using evil he'd become good. But I forgot about that, so he's still an evil shit! The whole thing's owned by Top Cow though, I may have some part of it, but it's basically theirs.

Mal Coney on THE DARKNESS

I THINK Garth wanted to do his best, but didn't really have enough time. We had a chat at his house over a cup of tea and came up with this high-octane dark adventure story, *Heart of Darkness* as a 4-parter for **The Darkness** [#11-14]. There are parts in the story which open up lots of new ideas and new directions, and Garth just let me run with it, and we were both really pleased with the way it turned out. As Top Cow was especially pleased with it, I'm writing **The Darkness** solo from #15 onwards and there's a spin-off title, **Tales of the Darkness**, currently in the planning stages which picks up on these new ideas in the *Heart of Darkness* story.

The way I look at writing **The Darkness** is that I'm not keen on long story arcs. I don't think readers can keep drawn-out plots in their heads month in month out. Life's way too short for great long serials.

*THE AGELESS war between the forces of light and dark is reflected in Top Cow's two top-selling companion titles, **Witchblade** and **The Darkness**.*

Currently in the possession of Sara Pezzini, the ancient Witchblade weapon was designed specifically to combat the evil weapon of the Darkness – currently within Jackie Estacudo, a mob hitman.

*Natural enemies, each has the destruction of the other as its ultimate goal with Pezzini and Estacudo their latest pawns. Although Estacudo first appeared in **Cyberforce Sourcebook #2**, the actual Darkness power debuted in **Medieval Spawn/Witchblade**.*

Garth Ennis on top sellers and team-ups

IT'S QUITE surprising, **The Darkness** #11 being the month's top seller. I guess it's got a lot to do with all the variant covers. But I thought the bottom had fallen out of that market some time ago.

The first I knew of the variants was when I saw them mentioned in the trade press! Top Cow also took full page ads headlined with huge "Garth is Back" headlines and Mal's name really small at the bottom, which was embarrassing as Mal did 90% of it.

I'd been intending to quit the book at issue six. But I felt a wee bit bad about leaving as the **Medieval Spawn/Witchblade** title I'd written for them paid for my laserdisc player. So Mal and I worked out a new four-issue plot for **The Darkness**. Mal then wrote it up and I just did a few edits and bits of rewriting.

I know writing teams are popular, but I'd never worked with a co-writer before, I like to write my own stuff. But Mal's a hell of a writer. I've known him about 10 years through a comic shop in Belfast. The same place I met John McRae, who I work with on **Hitman** and **Dicks**.

Mal Coney: Getting into the business

I SUPPOSE the highest profile thing I'd done before **The Darkness** was **Holy Cross** for Fantagraphics. It's been three issues so far, with a graphic novel, **The Moon Looked Down and Laughed**, coming out in February. Paul J. Holden, who did the third issue, is drawing it.

I also wrote a one-off for Eros two months ago, called **Dandyland**. Of course, being for Eros, nobody in Britain will see it, because of all the hassles with customs. Which is a shame, because it's all about an Oscar Wilde fetish and it's got to be the least offensive comic in the entire **Previews** ordering catalogue for that month.

But the first big league stuff I did was with Pat Mills for Fleetway's **Crisis** on *Third World War*. Pat had come over to Belfast to do a signing at Talisman, that was where we met. I started corresponding with him and he apparently liked the tone of my letters so he invited me to co-write with him when the *Third World War* story was briefly set in Ireland.

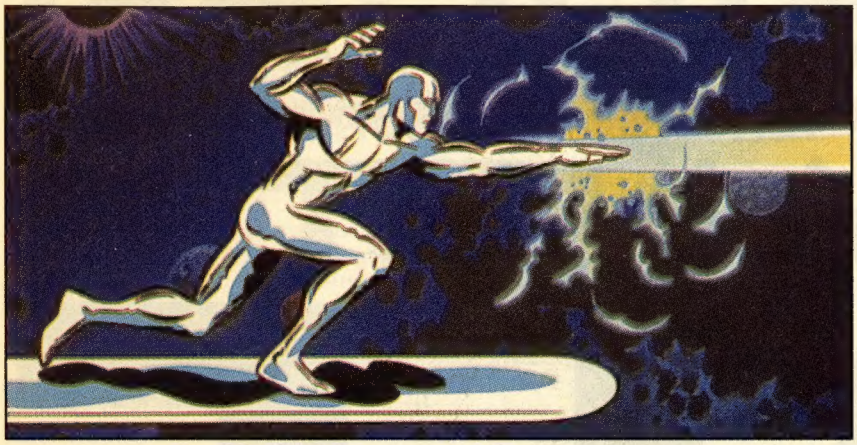
The trouble is you get written into an adult-comics ghetto. People in this business like to pigeonhole you when it comes to writing assignments. You almost have to burst their bubble with a magnum.

I'd completed **Holy Cross** for self-publishing, until I looked into the costs. I really couldn't afford the luxury of such a pipe dream, reality forced me to find an outside publisher. I sent a chunk of it to **Cerebus**'s Dave Sim and, as this was at the time he was regularly being featured in **The Comics Journal**, I guess its publisher Fantagraphics was foremost in his mind. He suggested them and his recommendation got the ball rolling, eventually.

That was three years ago, in 1994. But this gave me a small body of work, which, amazingly enough, got me interviews for TV and radio, and some really good reviews. Though it was pretty low key in the entire industry, I had a fairly high profile for a fortnight.

Garth used to frequent Talisman where I work and he liked **Holy Cross**, but he thought my unpublished stuff was better.

When he reached the stage that he needed somebody to take some of the pressure off him, as he liked my work, he got in touch with me. But it wasn't nepotism, because Top Cow really liked what I was doing as well.



TV leads Silver Surfer deluge

Marvel Comics to offer repackaged ***Silver Surfer*** *material to coincide with animated TV show's February debut*

ANTICIPATING being able to reach a new audience through the impending *Silver Surfer* cartoon series, Marvel is reprinting highlights from the tragic hero's past in a variety of formats.

Three collections are being prepared:

• **The Essential Silver Surfer Volume One** is the latest low cost black and white compilation.

This 528-page trade paperback collects the Stan Lee and John Buscema 17 issues of the Surfer's first series [1968]. Curiously it is incomplete, omitting the 18th and final issue, drawn by co-creator Jack Kirby. Priced $12.99, it ships on February 18.

• **Silver Surfer: Parable** is a $5.99 64-page prestige format reprint of Epic's two-issue $1.00 **Silver Surfer** title [1988]. By Lee and Jean (Moebius) Giraud, it ships on February 4.

• Priced $3.50, the 80-page **Silver Surfer: Inner Demons** reprints stories from last year's **Silver Surfer** #123, 125 and 126.

By J. M. DeMatteis (story) and Ron Garney and Bob Wiacek (art), the comic ships on February 11.

Cult creators unite on Crypt of Dawn

THE LONG-awaited third issue of **Crypt of Dawn** will feature *Culture*, the first collaboration between two cult indie creators: **Dawn**'s Joseph Michael Linsner and Robb (**Safety Belt Man**) Horan.

This latest issue, priced $2.95, also includes the debut of *Collision* by **Animal Mystic**'s Dark One and a sword and sorcery adventure by Eva Hopkins (words) and **Fang**'s Kevin J Taylor (pictures). The cover features a new Dawn visual by Linsner.

Sirius Entertainment's black and white **Crypt of Dawn** #3 is shipping almost a full year after #2, having been scheduled for a February release.

IN BRIEF

New Vertigo Vérité one-shot from DC

FORMER **Hellblazer** writer Jamie Delano and current **Hellblazer** artist Sean Phillips join forces for DC's 64-page **Vertigo Vérité: Hell Eternal**, a tale of obsession and passion.

Described by DC as "a disturbing story of personal and political extremism, blood and swastikas, sex and guns", the plot of this prestige format title is a mixture of fact and fiction inspired by the true exploits of three young Britons who became involved with neo-Nazis and – after escaping to America – were shot dead.

***Vertigo Vérité: Hell Eternal**, priced $6.95, ships on February 18.*

Luther Arkwright update

CREATOR Bryan Talbot has updated **Comics International** on **The Legacy of Luther Arkwright**, to be published by Dark Horse towards the end of 1998. It will be 280 pages, not 170 as originally noted, and will be coloured by Angus (**The Blue Lily**) McKie. Talbot added that Luther Arkwright first appeared in *The Papist Affair* in Brainstorm's **Mixed Bunch** #1 [UK; 1976].

Further delay for Flash life story

ALREADY rescheduled from October 22 to November 26, DC Comics' publication of the Gil Kane illustrated **Life Story of the Flash** hardback has now been pushed back to December 10.

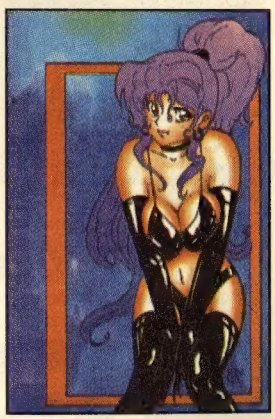
New Valiant anthology from Acclaim

ACCLAIM's Steve Vrattos has informed **Comics International**, "There will indeed be a Valiant Heroes quarterly anthology, tentatively beginning in May, but it is still in the rudimentary planning stages. We haven't even come up with a title yet.

"Although the main thrust will be new stories about the characters in and around the Valiant Universe, it will also function as a means to reproduce Valiant material, not available to the general audience, like American Entertainment's **Quantum & Woody** #0 and the **X-O Manowar Fan** exclusive," he added.

Vrattos concluded, "It is our intention to push the envelope with the new material, showcasing new talent, surprise talent, experimenting with the form and such."

Brainstorm's new manga title



VAMPEROTICA publishers Brainstorm Comics is to continue its expansion into American manga with the launch of **The Vampire Zone**.

Featuring erotic vampire stories, this black and white series is intended to be in the tradition of TV's *The Twilight Zone*, hence its title.

The Vampire Zone #1 will be available with either a regular or a nude cover.

***The Vampire Zone** #1, priced $2.95 (regular) and $3.95 (nude), ships in February.*

New Xena mini-series from Lopresti

AARON (**Xena** #0) Lopresti is writing and drawing the two-part **Xena: Bloodlines**, scheduled for May publication by Topps Comics.

Lopresti said, "Since I am pencilling and inking both issues it will take me about four months just to complete my part. Also the title **Bloodlines** is tentative, subject to approval, but I can't see any reason why it would be changed."

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FORBIDDEN PLANET

Marvel appoints high profile creators to head up editorial

MARVEL has appointed three well-known professional creators to implement editorial changes, hoping to reverse its continuing sales decline.

Boosting its flagging credibility within the industry, Marvel's hiring of Michael Golden, Mark Waid and Chris Claremont is seen as a positive move by insiders.

Michael Golden

Michael Golden, a 20-year veteran of the comics industry, becomes Marvel's new senior art director responsible for art and production for the entire publishing line. He will also train and supervise the creative personnel.

Mark Waid

Captain America writer Mark Waid joins the company on a part time basis to work with the newer members of the editorial staff.

Chris Claremont

Although no official announcement has been made, former **X-Men** writer Chris Claremont is now in situ as Marvel's vice president — editorial director, responsible for editorial and creative direction.

Financial Update

With attornies for the Chase Manhattan Bank claiming the company has been pushed close to insolvency, a federal judge has ordered the appointment of a trustee to run Marvel.

This effectively takes corporate control away from Marvel's current board of directors.

Ellis and Dillon back at WildStorm

STORMWATCH writer Warren Ellis and Steve (**Preacher**) Dillon are reuniting for **Gen[13] Bootleg** Annual #1 (right), a sequel to their 1996 annual.

Once again the Gen[13] team is on holiday, this time in New York where it gets involved with an English rock journalist and "the cop from hell".

Two other 40-page $2.95 annuals have also been scheduled by WildStorm:

• DV8 Annual #1 features a story by **Crimson Nun's** Ruben Diaz in which the Deviants must track down Copycat before she is sold into slavery to a cosmic overlord. It is pencilled by Ale (**Fem 5**) Garza and inked by **Justice League America's** Drew Geraci.

• In WildC.A.T.s Annual #1, a cure is sought for an experimental Kherabim/Daemonite virus that has infected Majestic.

StormWatch and WildCORE's Zealot guest star.

The annual is written by **Starman's** James Robinson and pencilled by Larry (**Tribe**) Stroman.

DV8 Annual #1, Gen[13] Bootleg Annual #1 and WildC.A.T.s Annual #1 will all ship on February 25.

*ABOVE: Steve Rude's promotional art for the unscheduled **Jimmy Olsen** project that he is illustrating for DC. The 48-page story – by Groo's Mark Evanier – is based on an outline written by the late Jack Kirby, when **Superman's Pal, Jimmy Olsen** was one of his Fourth World titles.*

IN BRIEF

Predator stalks Yanks and Rebs in Civil War limited series

DARK Horse's latest **Predator** mini-series is set during the American Civil War as two opposing groups of soldiers band together to face a common enemy.

Written by Nancy Collins, author of **Sunglasses after Dark,** the two-part **Predator: Hell Come A-Walkin'** is illustrated by **The Crow: City of Angels'** Dean Ormston.

Dark Horse is also collecting its three-issue **Predator: Hell & Hot Water** series into an 88-page trade paperback. Written by Mark Schultz, it features the artwork of Gene Colan and Gregory Wright.

***Predator: Hell Come A-Walkin' #1**, priced $2.95, ships on February 25. **Predator: Hell & High Water** trade paperback, priced $9.95, ships on February 18.*

Ragmop returns to self-publishing

FOLLOWING the two issues published by Image as part of Jim Valentino's "non-line", Rob Walton is returning to self-publishing his Eisner Award-nominated **Ragmop.**

Walton's Planet Lucy Press will publish **Ragmop** volume 2 #3 in February. The next issue will then wrap up both the current storyline and the series. Walton then plans to spend the summer working in animation.

In autumn, Planet Lucy will issue a **Ragmop** trade paperback containing a re-edited "director's cut" of the complete 14-issue run.

Dark Horse cans Chris Carter comic

DARK Horse has cancelled plans for a comic based on Chris (*The X-Files*) Carter's TV series, *Millennium.*

Asked about the project, Dark Horse press officer Shawna Ervin-Gore responded, "**Millennium** is deader than Elvis".

Marvel's Conan lives again

ROY Thomas is once more writing Conan, the character he launched into comics in 1970.

Marvel's new **Conan the Barbarian vs the Lord of the Spiders** is being drawn by Stefano Raffaele and Ralph Cabrera. The three-part series features Harpagus, last seen in 1970's **Conan the Barbarian #4,** a wizard who has the power to transform himself into a giant, venomous spider.

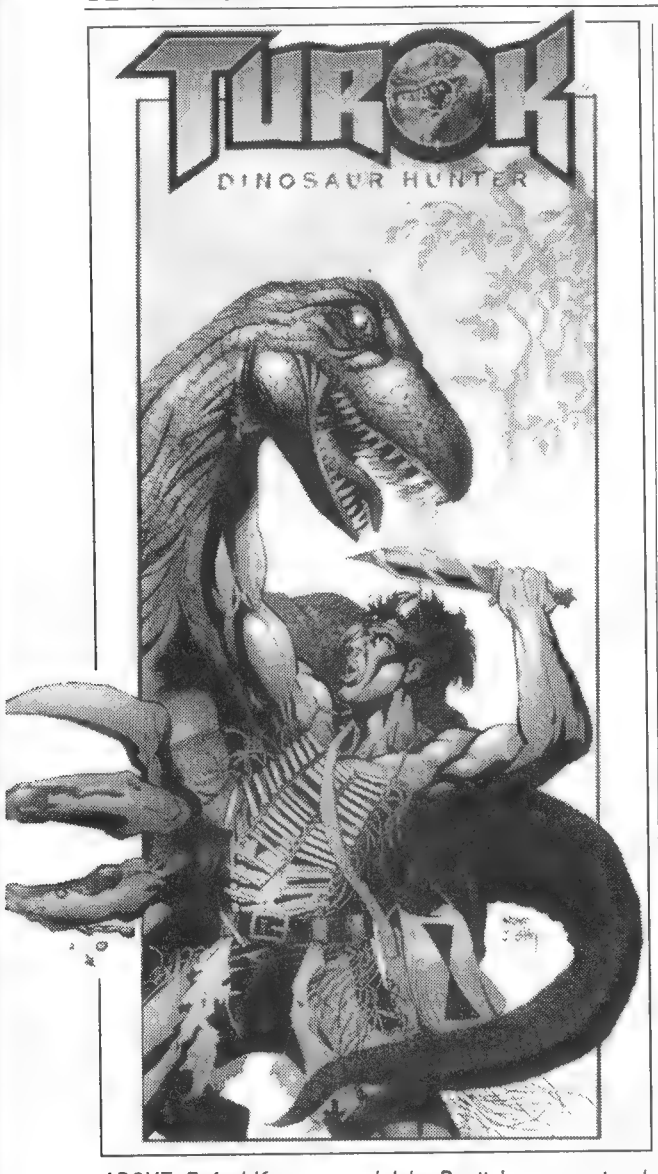
Turok artist Rafael Kayanan informed **Comics International** that he is also working with Thomas on adaptations of other stories by Conan's creator, Robert E. Howard. These are intended for publication by Richard Ashford, who had been editor of the Marvel **Conan** line during its 1994 relaunch. Ashford plans to publish the stories through his new Cross Plains Comics imprint.

***Conan the Barbarian vs the Lord of the Spiders #1**, priced $2.50, ships on January 28.*

Vamps go for three

ORIGINALLY planned for Halloween but now unscheduled, **Vamps: Pumpkin Time** will be the third series to feature the female vampires created by writer Elaine Lee and artist Will Simpson.

The DC/Vertigo title will only be a three issue series despite the apparent success of the previous six-parters: **Vamps** [1994] and **Vamps: Hollywood & Vein** [1996].



ABOVE: Rafael Kayanan and John Beatty's cover artwork for Acclaim's 112-page ***Turok Dinosaur Hunter*** *trade paperback. Shipping in February, this $9.95 volume is written by Fabian Nicieza and illustrated by Kayanan and Rodney Ramos. In addition to collecting the first two* ***Turok*** *quarterlies, it also reprints the scarce 16-page comic that accompanied the Turok video game. It leads directly into Acclaim's forthcoming* ***Turok*** *series by Nicieza and Kayanan, scheduled for a March release.*

Wonder Woman and domestic violence

DC COMICS is producing a Wonder Woman one-shot that will focus on domestic violence and in particular wife beating.

Wonder Woman: The Once and Future Story will be written by **Legend of Wonder Woman**'s Trina Robbins and illustrated by Colleen (**A Distant Soil**) Doran.

Currently unscheduled, the 48-page prestige format title employs two parallel storylines. One will recount the myth of Thesaus's conquest and subjugation of the Amazons. The other, set in present-day Ireland, utilises an investigation into the remains of an apparent Amazonian civilisation as the backdrop for an examination of domestic violence.

Doran said, "Although the story is a woman's issue, it doesn't beat you over the head with feminism.

"I think people are tired of the shallow stories we've been getting in comics lately. This has a little meat on its bones, and it's told in a very dynamic fashion. It's a very moving story," she concluded.

Taking nothing for granted

Alan Grant is developing a varied range of projects, for the US, the UK, South America and mainland Europe. As he explains...

BATMAN: Shadow of the Bat and **Lobo** writer Alan Grant told **Comics International** that one of the projects he is working on for DC involves Batman being kidnapped by aliens.

A prestige format one-shot, **Batman: Alien Abduction** begins when Batman discovers that he cannot account for a period of time missing from his life.

With art by frequent collaborator Norm Breyfogle, Grant uses alleged real-life accounts of alien abductions as the basis for Batman's own dilemma.

Anarky

Breyfogle will also be the artist on a continuing **Anarky** series to be launched by DC during 1998.

Co-created by Grant and Breyfogle, Anarky was introduced as a new Bat-villain in **Detective Comics** #608 [1990]. A four-issue **Anarky** series written by Grant and drawn by Breyfogle and Josef Rubinstein was published by DC in 1997.

Grant said that he and Breyfogle have been given the go-ahead for the new series, and that he already has the first 12 issues plotted.

Grant and Breyfogle are also working on a Lobo yarn, *True Stories from The Highway Patrol*, told in the style of TV documentaries such as *Cops* and *LAPD*.

Batman/Lobo

Simon Bisley and Alan Grant return to familiar ground in their **Batman/Lobo** one-shot.

They had previously worked together on 1991's **Batman/Judge Dredd: Judgement on Gotham** and the first **Lobo** mini-series [1990].

Originally intended by Grant to be an in-continuity story, the **Batman/Lobo** project has now become an *Elseworlds* book.

Grant said that, despite his long association with the Dark Knight, DC was concerned he would make Batman the butt of the book's humour.

Outside of his DC work, Grant agreed during a recent trip to Buenos Aires to write a story for **Hacha** magazine, to be illustrated by Enrique Alcatena, who has previously worked on Dark Horse's **Judge Dredd vs Predator**.

Mazeworld

Grant also said that he and artist Arthur Ranson are now working on Book Two of their *Mazeworld* saga for 2000AD, with the possibility of a further follow-up in 1999.

Publishers in Spain and Germany are in negotiations to publish European editions of Grant and Ranson's first *Mazeworld* book from 2000AD #1014-1023.

An American reprint is due in February under the title of **The Hanged Man** (cover: above). This will be a fortnightly two-issue black and white series from Caliber, priced $2.95.

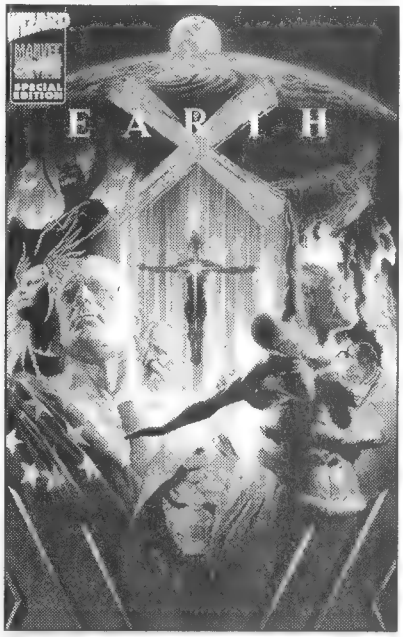
Grant and his wife, Sue, are also considering self-publishing *Mazeworld Book One* as a 64-page full colour album.

Duke Nukem

One non-comics project in Grant's future is a 75,000 word novel based on the highly-successful *Duke Nukem* computer game, due for publication in the spring.

ONE WAS OLD. ONE WAS MATRONLY. WARM. SHE SORT OF REMINDED ME OF YOU. AND THE THIRD WAS YOUNG.
MAIDEN, MOTHER AND CRONE.
A BLESSED VISION INDEED.

ABOVE: Michael Zulli and Vince Locke's artwork from ***Witchcraft: La Terreur****, a three-issue Vertigo series. Written by James Robinson, the first $2.50 issue of this long-awaited sequel to 1994's* ***Witchcraft*** *ships on February 4.*



Wizard's Earth X

*ALEX ROSS has contributed a major body of work to New York's newly-renamed Wizard Entertainment for an **Earth X** supplement to **Wizard: The Comics Magazine** #77. A 16-page sketchbook, it features Ross and writer Jim Krueger's highly detailed vision of an alternative Marvel universe. Pictured left and above are Ross's take on Captain America and Spider-Man.*

Marshall Law meets the Mask

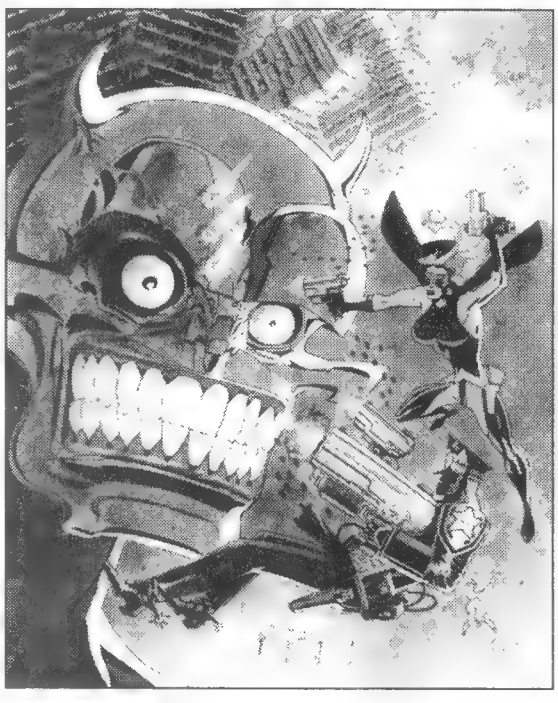
SUPERHERO-hater Marshal Law is back at Dark Horse Comics for a two-issue confrontation with the madcap Mask.

Pat Mills described his approach to the story: "When the Mask is seen as a key to the sub-conscious, it has a lot of potential. It gave us a chance to bring back the Sleepman, Law's most deranged and powerful enemy and to explore the depths of his soul...

"It was a helluva trip, 'cos it was pitch black in there..." Mills concluded.

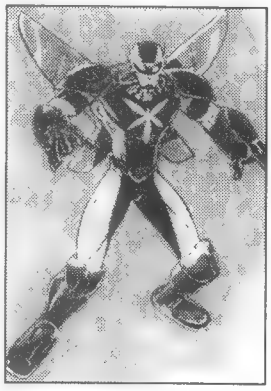
Marshal Law was created by Mills and artist Kevin O'Neill, who illustrates this clash which could result in the death of everyone in Northern California.

The Mask/Marshal Law #1 is priced $2.95 and ships on February 25.



IN BRIEF

Spider-Man's Identity Crisis



1998 IS set to be a key year for Spider-Man as Marvel is about to launch a major new storyline that begins with the Webslinger abandoning his costumed identity.

Hot on the heels of January's *Spider-Hunt*, the prelude to the multi-part *Identity Crisis* runs through all of February's regular Spider-Man titles. The serial continues in the March and April titles and results in Peter Parker taking on four new secret identities.

Also due for Spider-Man in 1998 is a *Year One*-style 12-issue limited series to be written and drawn by John (**Wonder Woman**) Byrne.

Byrne explained the series would "retell, update, and tweak what we have arbitrarily decided was the first 12 months of Spider-Man's career." While it is unclear how much of the previously documented history will remain intact, it is believed the recent **Amazing Fantasy** #16-17 will become a Byrne victim.

Waid and Morrison: musical titles

MARK Waid will be writing **JLA** #18-19, filling for Grant Morrison whose workload includes filling in – with co-writer Mark Millar – for Waid and his co-writer Brian Augustyn on **The Flash**!

Batman's quake becomes a cataclysm

THE FIRST major Batman crossover in almost two years – originally announced as *Earthquake* – is the 17-part *Cataclysm*.

Telling of an Earthquake attack on Gotham by a new villain the Quakemaster, the storyline encompasses all of the Batman family of titles shipping in February and March, including **Catwoman** and **Nightwing**. It also involves three one-shots: **Batman: Blackgate – Isle of Men**, **Batman: Spoiler/Huntress – Blunt Trauma** and **Batman: Arkham Asylum – Tales of Madness**.

Expansion for Doran's Distant Soil

COLLEEN Doran told **Comics International** that beginning with issue #25 she will be expanding **A Distant Soil**'s page count to 48 pages to incorporate short stories by SF and fantasy writers.

Neil Gaiman's *Trollbridge* will launch this series of back-ups, which will be told either as comics or illustrated text.

A Distant Soil #25 will also be the 15th anniversary issue and will finally take the story beyond the plot of the last WaRP Graphics issue, published in 1986.

Acclaim's celebrity goat to go solo

CHRISTOPHER (**Quantum & Woody**) Priest is writing a 48-page Acclaim one-shot with a working title of **H.A.E.D.U.S: The Adventures of Vincent Van Goat**.

Although no artist has been assigned, it is scheduled for publication in April and will directly tie into Priest's forthcoming **Concrete Jungle: Legend of the Black Lion** mini-series.

Priest said, "H.A.E.D.U.S. is Vincent's code name. The name stands for Heavily Armoured Espionage Deadly Uber-Sheep."

Introduced in **Quantum & Woody** #3 by Priest and penciller Mark Bright, the goat has proved to be surprisingly popular with readers. When asked if he could explain why, Priest responded, "No. It's a total mystery to Doc [Mark] Bright and me. He's not cute. He doesn't dance. He knows no tricks. He's a goat. We just don't get it."

Marvel to revamp Star Trek titles

MARVEL is replacing its cancelled **Star Trek: Deep Space Nine** and **Star Trek: Voyager** comics with a single continuing series.

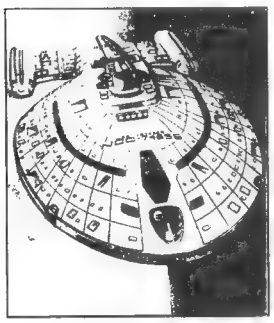
Stories will be told in mini-series arcs – much like Dark Horse's **Star Wars: X-Wing Rogue Squadron**. The comic will be promoted using the story title and mini-series numbering. These will appear on the cover but the full issue will appear inside.

This new **Star Trek** title debuts with *Splash Down*, a four-part *Star Trek: Voyager* story by the former **Star Trek: Voyager** team of Laurie Sutton, Terry Pallot and Al Milgrom. A multi-part *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* serial will follow.

Further story arcs will alternate between *Voyager* and *Deep Space Nine* with an occasional *Star Trek: The Next Generation* serial.

The five-part **Star Trek: The Untold Series** will also launch in January.

Focusing on the previously unexplored five-year period between *Star Trek: The Motion Picture* and *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan*, it is being written by Marvel editor Glenn Greenberg and is drawn by **Star Trek: Early Voyages'** Michael Collins and inked by Keith (**US Agent**) Williams.



***Star Trek: Voyager – Splash Down**, priced $1.99, ships on January 7. **Star Trek: The Untold Voyages**, priced $2.50, ships on January 14.*

Tomahawk at Vertigo

DC IS reviving its 18th century frontier hero Tomahawk for an unscheduled **Vertigo** one-shot.

Tom Yeates will illustrate Rachel (**Doom Patrol**) Pollack's story of this unique western hero whose setting was the American War of Independence. Yeates is probably best-known for his Dark Horse **Tarzan** work while Pollack's **Godmother Night** won the 1997 World Fantasy Award for best novel.

First appearing in **Star Spangled Comics** #69 [1947], Tomahawk's own 140 issue title ran from 1950 until 1972.

Hellboy spin-off

DARK Horse's **Abe Sapien: Drums of the Dead** is the first spin-off from Mike Mignola's acclaimed **Hellboy** series.

Written by **Predator: Strange Roux's** Brian McDonald and illustrated by Derek (**Predator: Bad Blood**) Thompson, its lead story stars **Hellboy** supporting character Abe Sapien.

His first solo adventure is located in the South Seas where weird deaths are linked to an ancient tragedy.

The 10-page backup story, in which Hellboy confronts malevolent heads in Japan, is by Mike Mignola who also supplies cover art for this full colour one-shot.

***Abe Sapien: Drums of the Dead #1**, priced $2.95, ships on March 4.*

"Kick-ass direction" for Shadowman

ACCLAIM's voodoo-based **Shadowman** is to get a new creative team and a new focus with #16.

Incoming as writer is newcomer Serge Clerémont. Of Haitian descent and an active practitioner of voodoo, he is ideally suited to **Shadowman**. Penciller Klayton Krain, and **Brainbanx** inker Temujin complete the new team.

The new "kick-ass direction", as Acclaim marketing co-ordinator Steve Vrattos described it, includes new powers for Shadowman and the introduction of the Charon Alignment, a sinister corporation with characters familiar to Valiant readers among its members.

Coinciding with the changes, **Shadowman** will cease to carry a mature readers warning despite its graphic content (above).

***Shadowman #16**, priced $2.50, ships In February.*

The Crow to meet Razor in first team-up

RAZOR publisher London Night Studios is to pair up its dark mistress of vengeance with James O'Barr's cult creation the Crow in **The Crow/Razor: Kill the Pain**.

A two-issue series, this will be the first team-up for the Crow and is written by Razor creator Everette Hartsoe and drawn by **Darque Razor's** Uglyboy.

Limited to 5,000 copies, **The Crow/Razor: Kill the Pain Tour Book** one-shot features a prelude to the series and biographies of the creative team.

***The Crow/Razor: Kill the Pain Tour Book**, priced $5.00, ships in February.*

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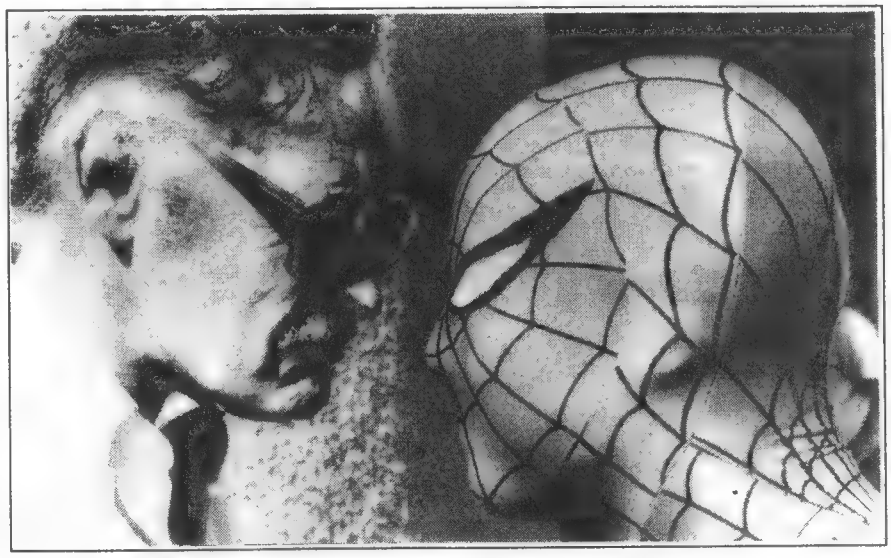
DON'T MISS OUT !

Industry pays tribute to Stan "The Man" Lee at 75

He joined Marvel as a teenager in 1940, and grew to become the Walt Disney of comics. A leader, a visionary and the industry's greatest spokesman, the LA-based publisher of Marvel now supervises the adaptation of the company's comics characters into film, TV and animation. To celebrate Stan Lee's 75th birthday, Comics International asked for tributes from the comics industry.



DAN ABNETT, writer: **Resurrection Man, Star Trek: Early Voyages**

In an industry bursting with superlatively talented people, there can be few who have shaped the overall state of the art as comprehensively and durably as Stan, and fewer still who have done it by allowing their ebullient personality to invade the page.

Joyful, avuncular and so damn proud of what he had for us, Stan was always the ultimate comics showman, singing out the attractions on offer, selling us a ticket to the show and then sitting with us to chuckle at how great it all was until the lights came up.

BRIAN AUGUSTYN, writer: **The Flash, JLA: Year One**

To the man who made it cool to read comics, and cooler to make them...
To the man whose hyperbolic enthusiasm enervated a flagging art form...
To the Man who made us all true believers...
Excelsior and happy birthday, Stan. With wishes for at least 75 more.

MIKE BARON, writer: **The Badger, Hawk & Dove**

Stan Lee seems to float above the hurly-burly like the Cheshire Cat in Alice In Wonderland. Always smiling, always composed, he is a fitting goodwill ambassador to the world at large.

His stories will be remembered for their generosity of spirit, as well as their startling new modes of expression.

FABIAN NICIEZA, writer/president and publisher: Acclaim Comics

Best wishes for Stan on his 75th. I sincerely hope, in some small way, that on a personal huckster level, as a writer and as president/publisher, I've kept alive the spirit of fun which Stan infused into this medium. It just happens to be for Acclaim rather than Marvel.

Indeed, I'd venture to say, that some companies are keeping Stan's spirit alive better than Marvel is. :-)

JERRY ORDWAY, writer: **Power of Shazam, Wildstar**

Stan Lee was and is Marvel, along with Jack Kirby, Steve Ditko, John Romita, and the other talented artists he collaborated with.

As a 10-year old, he made me go to the dictionary time and time again, to look up words that Peter Parker, or Reed Richards used in dialogue. He made me sympathize with Spider-Man, Daredevil and Marvel's other heroes with feet of clay. His enthusiasm in the letters pages and the Bullpen Bulletins columns made me feel like Marvel was making comics that spoke directly to me, and I thank him for that.

Happy birthday, Stan. You're still The Man!

JIMMY PALMIOTTI, artist/co-publisher: Event Comics

Meeting Stan Lee, you would never guess in a million years that he was anywhere near 60, let alone 75! Stan recently came to New York and I had the pleasure of sitting in while he spoke to a group of people about what makes a good story and what doesn't. For a guy who has been in the biz for so long, his ideas were cutting edge and intelligent, and reminded everyone why they still hold on to those classic comics.

He created a generation of comic readers with his work and continues to show us why he holds on to the title of "The Man".

RACHEL POLLACK, writer: **Doom Patrol, Tomahawk**

All these years later, it's almost impossible to remember the impact **The Fantastic Four** had on comics. I had just about given up on comics when I noticed a book that had the nerve to call itself "The World's Greatest Comic". I picked it up and couldn't believe my eyes. Here were characters who acted like people! They argued, they whined, they behaved like irresponsible brats. They didn't waste time on secret identities (I never could understand why Superman pretended to be Clark Kent). They even had to pay for things.

Virtually all the later comics work we consider revolutionary probably would have been impossible without Lee and Kirby's decision to take themselves – and their medium – seriously.

MARK VERHEIDEN, writer: **Aliens, The American**

The most exciting thing about celebrating Stan Lee's 75th birthday is not looking back over his incredible career, but looking forward and imagining what might come next. I've been lucky enough to meet Stan on several occasions, and I marvel (*ahem*) at his enthusiasm and drive. What a legacy. What a career.

Stan Lee's wild imagination has thrilled several generations, and his creations will continue to thrill many generations to come.

I can't wait to see what he comes up with next!

URSULA WARD, Marvel Comics, New York.

Being British and working across the Atlantic at Marvel in New York for the past 7+ years, I thought it appropriate that I should send my birthday congratulations to you via the UK.

Stan, you are, without exception, the warmest and most sincere person I've had the good fortune to know and I wish you the happiest 75th birthday with many, many more to come.

Congratulations; you're the greatest.

MARV WOLFMAN, writer: **Deathstroke, Night Force**

I worked for Stan for several years, first as an assistant editor then as editor-in-chief of Marvel. During that time I saw past the public "Hollywood" image he projects to the man himself.

Stan is a wonderful talent, a great writer, maybe an even better editor, and a guy who does care about the people he works with.

His words inspired my generation to see beyond what had been done in comics before, and he took us all to places none of us had ever seen before.

I have great admiration for Stan the man as well as Stan the writer.

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THANKS FOR MAKING '97 OUR BIGGEST YEAR EVER !

'98 will be even bigger !

DATES FOR 1998

NEC, BIRMINGHAM : 21st & 22nd March
SECC, GLASGOW - 29th & 30th August
NEC, BIRMINGHAM - 7th & 8th November

Get these dates in your diary, and don't dare miss them as they will have the biggest package yet of guest, freebies, displays and dealers.
The NEC has grown bigger still and we now have 638 dealer tables each day and the new event in Glasgow will have 484 dealer tables.
Full details of signings, etc, will be in Comics International in the months preceding the shows, and as we now have major sponsorship for all 3 events look out for some big names !

For a dealer information pack for the events, send a SAE to ;
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Below are a couple of the 22 signings we had at the last NEC event

Over 12,000 collectors visited the last Memorabilia - make sure you're there in '98

EXCLUSIVE PREVIEW: 300 by Frank Miller

*IN CONTRAST to the fictional world of his **Sin City** series, writer/artist Frank Miller's next project will be **300**, an historical story of triumph and tragedy. Tentatively scheduled to debut in May, Miller's **300** recounts the story of the Battle of Thermopylae and the events that led to it. Set in 480BC, it tells how a force of 300 Spartan warriors led by Leonidas, king of Sparta, made a stand against the entire invading Persian army who were intent on conquering ancient*

BARELY A YEAR AGO
SPARTA
UNINVITED GUESTS
SHOW ME TO YOUR KING.
I BRING WORD FROM GREAT XERXES.
I DON'T KNOW OUR KING'S A VERY BUSY MAN
AND HE'S GOT AN ACUTE SENSE OF SMELL. PERSIAN COULD WE OFFER YOU A BATH?
I'M SURE OUR WOMEN HAVE A PERFUME YOU'LL FIND AGREEABLE.
GREEK ARROGANCE IT WILL BE THE DEATH OF YOU ALL
BE AFRAID, SPARTA WILL BURN TO THE GROUND. ONLY THE WORD OF KING LEONIDAS CAN SAVE IT
HE SOUNDS SERIOUS MAYBE WE SHOULD TELL THE KING
YEAH, I SUPPOSE WE DON'T WANT ANYBODY SAYING SPARTANS AREN'T GOOD HOSTS.

Greece. Miller's retelling of this epic tale of bravery is planned as a five-issue mini-series to be published by Dark Horse's creator-owned Legend imprint. Unlike ***Sin City****, Miller's art for the series will be fully painted by Lynn Varley, best known for her colour work on Miller's landmark* ***Dark Knight Returns*** *graphic novel.* ***300*** *marks the first time these two have worked together since 1990's* ***Elektra Lives Again*** *graphic novel for Marvel Comics. While Miller has designed the* ***300*** *comic as a series of double-page spreads, it is his intention that the collected version will be published in a wide, landscape format (double the width of a regular comic) with each two-page art spread from the comic printed as a wide single page.*

300 *is TM and © Frank Miller Inc, 1997*

Card News

Frozen fear – cult comics character carded by Bolt

MATT Martin's cult creation, Snowman, is to get his own set of 90 trading cards in February through Bolt Entertainment.

The cards feature new artwork by Martin and others including Bill (**Nira X**) Maus, plus Mike (**Widow**) Wolfer and Trent Kaniuga of **CreeD** fame.

Three bonus sets consist of five foil-enhanced cards, three autographed cards and six "ultra-scarce" blue leather cards.

Each eight card pack will include a coupon redeemable against a special **Snowman #½** title written and drawn by Martin.

This full colour comic will not be available elsewhere.

The *Snowman* cards will be limited to 3,000 boxes with 32 packs per box.

A variant edition box, limited to 750, will be signed by Martin. Bolt will also be producing a dedicated *Snowman* trading card binder, priced $18.

Launched by Hall of Heroes in 1996, the black and white **Snowman** title is now published by Avatar Press, who is also offering a 13" tall 1000 run Snowman statue priced $175.

Bisley and Eastman put second Heavy Metal movie on the cards

FOLLOWING Ralph Bakshi's 1981 *Heavy Metal* movie, the long-overdue celluloid follow-up from the rock fantasy comic magazine will be the incomprehensibly-titled *F.A.K.K.²*.

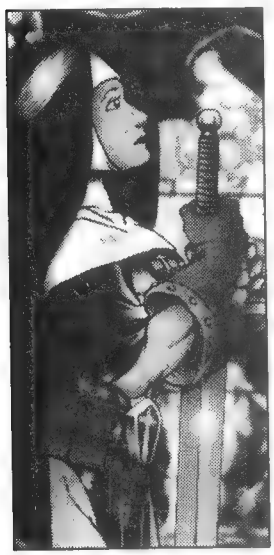
With this new movie almost completed, Comic Images is releasing a 72-card set of *F.A.K.K.² Rough Cut* trading cards.

Illustrated by **Batman: Judgment on Gotham's** Simon Bisley, the cards provide an introduction to the film's storyline as detailed by **Heavy Metal** publisher, Kevin Eastman.

There will be two levels of chase cards to collect, a set of six chromium photo cards and 500 autographed cards.

A *F.A.K.K.² Rough Cut* trading card binder is also being produced, retailing at $19.99.

The cards will ship in packs of eight, 48 packs to a box.



Warrior Nun limited and boxed factory set

BOLT Entertainment's 1997 *Warrior Nun Areala* trading card series is being offered as two limited edition boxed factory sets in February.

The regular edition – limited to 400 sets – contains the complete 90-card basic set plus the five-card gold foil chase set.

The limited edition of 75 sets includes the regular edition plus the "ultra-rare" six card white leather set, the six-card promo set and a custom made binder.

Created by Ben (**Ninja High School**) Dunn, the **Warrior Nun Areala** title was first published by Antarctic Press in 1994.

Since then she has appeared in several mini-series and crossovers.

A continuing series from Antarctic –**Warrior Nun Black and White** – debuted in 1997.

Simpsons down under

FROM the other side of the world, Australia's Downunder Trading Cards has produced a new set of cards based on the ever-popular TV cartoon, *The Simpsons*.

Shipping in February, the 210-card *Simpsons Downunder* set will ship in sealed and serial-numbered boxes of 30 packs with seven cards per pack.

Comic Images gets Sirius

THE HISTORY of Sirius Entertainment is the subject of a new 72 card set from Comic Images.

Featuring both original and previously published art, the *Sirius Gallery* cards include work by a wide range of artists who have been associated with Sirius since the company's inception five years ago.

Contributors include **Animal Mystic's** Dark One, Drew (**Poison Elves**) Hayes, **Dawn's** Michael Joseph Linsner, Kevin (**Fang**) Taylor, **Akiko's** Mark Crilley, Jill (**Scary Godmother**) Thompson and Roel – writer/artist of the forthcoming **The System**.

Shipping in February, the cards will be available in boxes of 48 packs with each pack containing eight cards.

The 3-ring nine-pocket page custom printed *Sirius Gallery* binder – priced $19.99 – will include an uncut 6-card press sheet.

Completing the set will be three levels of randomly-inserted chase cards: six chromium cover cards plus sketch cards and autographed cards.

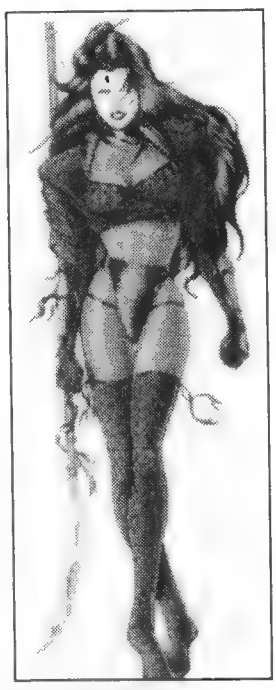
Shi goes mega in Krome chromium

SHIPPING in February, Krome Productions' latest addition to its 4x6" mega chromium card series will feature William Tucci's female warrior, Shi.

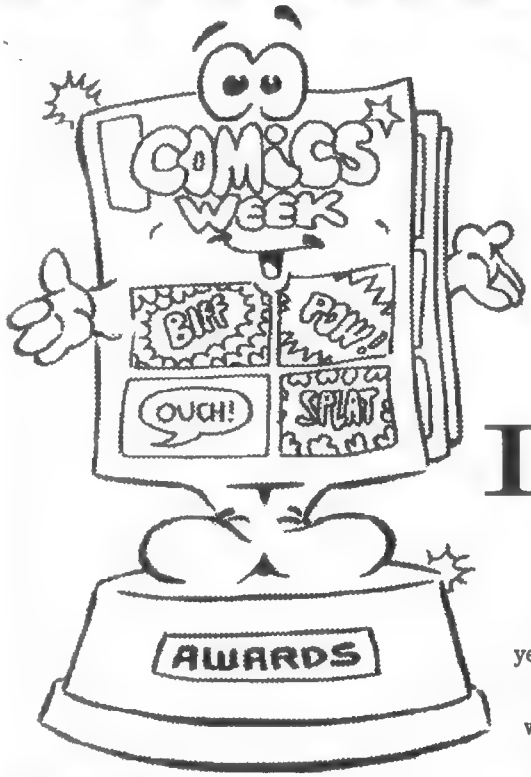
A 30-card set, the *Shi* cards will include work by Tucci and Crusade contributors including Marc Sasso, Val Mayerik and J. G. Jones.

Other Crusade stars featured include Tomoe and a chase set is also promised, utilizing "state-of-the-art chromium technology". A limited edition chromium hot box will be randomly inserted.

Together with a cover illustrated binder, the *Shi* mega chromium cards will ship in 36 pack boxes, each pack containing three cards.



BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND! THE ONLY VOTE THAT COUNTS . . .



The 2nd National Comics Awards

IN 1997, at a star studded ceremony hosted by Jonathan Ross and Paul Gambaccini, truckloads of glittering prizes were carried off by Preacher, with Kingdom Come giving it a run for its money, top awards going to Batman, Hitman, 2000AD, Strangehaven, Octobriana and Dan Dare, and the coveted trophy for Best British Comic Ever being raised aloft by The Beano. This year we raise the stakes, in a good cause, with a Penny Vote to find The Best Comic In The World . . Ever!, we squeeze more fans into the Awards Ceremony than before with the new low attendance price of just five quid (£4.50 in advance), and best of all we promise, yes *promise*, that the recipients of this year's National Comics Awards trophies (or, er, Jimmies) won't get silver paint all over them! The Awards will be presented at The Weston Theatre, UMIST, Manchester on the night of Saturday March 21st 1998 (the weekend of UKCAC, which takes place across the road). Places are limited so don't forget to book your seat when you vote (see foot of page). And remember, it's your vote that counts.

Best Writer

Sponsored by Comics Warehouse

Best Artist

Sponsored by Comics Warehouse

The Comic Book Postal Auctions Award for Best Comic (British)

Sponsored by Comic Book Postal Auctions

The Comics International Award for Best Comic (International)

Sponsored by Comics International

The SFX Award for Best Character

Sponsored by SFX magazine

The SFX Award for New Comic of 1997 (British)

Sponsored by SFX magazine

New Comic of 1997 (International)

Sponsored by Comics International

The Wiltshire (Bristol) Award for Best Self Published/Independent

Sponsored by Wiltshire (Bristol) Printers

Most Missed Character, Strip or Comic

Sponsor to be confirmed

The Diamond Star System Award for Best comic based Film/TV

Sponsored by Diamond Comic Distributors

The Avon Imaging Award for Best Supporting Character

Sponsored by Avon Imaging

Best Individual Story of 1997

Sponsored by Tripwire magazine

The Diamond PREVIEWS Award for Best Specialist Comics Publication

Sponsored by Diamond Comic Distributors

Best Newspaper Strip

Sponsor to be confirmed

The Cartoon Art Trust presentation of the Roll Of Honour (for outstanding achievement)

Presented by The Cartoon Art Trust

SPECIAL CATEGORY

The Best Comic In The World . . . Ever! - Penny Vote.

For the benefit of ChildLine. Registered Charity No 1003758 Each vote you register costs 50p. The minimum number of votes is four (ie £2's worth). All money goes straight to the charity - make cheques or postal orders payable to ChildLine. Ballot-stuffing is actively encouraged, and may the best charity win!

My choice of **Best Comic In The World . . . Ever!** is _____

I wish to register _____ votes @ 50p each. I enclose a cheque/PO for the total of _____ (made payable to **ChildLine**) Votes must be received by March 16 1998.

Name _____

Send your completed ballot form, and any payment for the Best Comic In The World Penny Vote (made payable to ChildLine only) or for tickets (made payable to National Comics Awards) to National Comics Awards, PO Box 48, Clevedon, Bristol BS21 7LQ. All votes to be received by March 16th 1998.

BE THERE THEN

HEY - I'VE JUST GOT TO BE THERE! I simply must attend the National Comics Awards in Manchester on Saturday March 21st. Please send me _____ tickets at the reduced advance price of £4.50 each (yes, I know they'll be five quid on the door). I enclose a cheque/p.o. (payable to National Comics Awards) for the total of £_____

Name _____

Address _____

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Welcome to our trade paperback and graphic novels catalogue – one of the largest, most diverse, and eclectic stocks in the country. Due to space limitations, we have had to keep to a simple listing, without descriptions. Most trades are collections of previously released material. For details/contents, please check out the listings in any recent Previews magazine, or call for information. All items are in stock at time of writing, although availability fluctuates – please call if you wish to check an item is available (telephone orders/reservations accepted by credit card only). Some trade paperbacks are co-published in the UK (usually by Titan Books) and USA. We make no distinction between import and UK editions, were the contents are near identical, and will usually be stocking the lowest cost edition. Prices are subject to change without notice, although we will endeavour to honour quoted prices wherever possible.

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HOTSHOTS

Every month ***Comics International*** *picks ten new titles from its Advance Listings. Will they be big sellers or overstocks destined for the 10p bins in a year? Our predictions run from three smiley faces (in our opinion a sure-fire hit) to only one smiley face (be careful out there!). Anything less would be a cold cut.*

☺☺☺ Youngblood 1

Awesome; Alan Moore & Steve Skroce; $2.50

One of the most controversial comic books of the '90s returns with a new team. **Youngblood** kick-started Image, helped launch Maximum Press and, six months after Awesome's debut now reappears completely revamped as Liefeld hands control over to Alan Moore and Steve Skroce. *Prediction:* Forget your prejudices against **Youngblood**, this one's sure to sell.

☺☺ Essential Silver Surfer

Marvel; Stan Lee & John Buscema; $7.99

A mammoth black and white reprint is hardly grounds for rapturous enthusiasm, but it gets a clear run in this somewhat ideas-bereft month. This classic collection of the late 1960s series shows why the Surfer attracted a cult following outside of regular comicbook circles. *Prediction:* An affordable collection with stunning artwork; should keep on selling for years to come.

☺☺ Mask/Marshal Law 1

Dark Horse; Pat Mills & Kevin O'Neill; $2.95

Arguably two characters past their sell-by dates. Both have had impressive careers, but neither really got out of the second division in sales. But as the two are both rooted in black humour, with Pat Mills and Kev O'Neill at the helm this could be a quality two-parter. *Prediction:* Solid but not hot.

☺☺ Shi: Masquerade 1

Crusade; Chris Golden + Tom Sniegoski & Ray Lago; $3.50

While others fall, there seems to be no sign of **Shi** overkill and this one-shot, by trading card artist Ray Lago, may help continue the popularity. Fully-painted comics, if done well, still achieve success and this is sure to keep Tucci's presence in the Top 100. *Prediction:* One to watch.

☺☺ Superboy 50

DC; Karl Kesel & Tom Grummett; $1.95

Another slack winter month from DC is brightened by the return of the creative team that made this comic such an immediate hit four years ago. This excellent duo kick off with a six-part homage to **Kamandi**, which perfectly suits Grummett and Kesel's love of the late Jack Kirby. *Prediction:* Could be this month's hit, returning the title to its previous level of success.

☺☺ Witchcraft: La Terreur 1

DC/Vertigo; James Robinson & Michael Zulli + Vince Locke; $2.50

Reuniting the creative team from the first **Witchcraft** series. A quality product which will appeal to all Vertigo fans. *Prediction:* Will equal the original's success and further consolidate Vertigo's chart presence.

☺ Blade 1

Marvel; Don McGregor & Brian Hagan; $2.99

Is this the best Marvel can do? The latest addition to the already troubled *Strange Tales* imprint already looks flawed. Blade isn't the most popular vampire-hunter. Artist Brian Hagan is a newcomer with a lot of potential, but McGregor has to go back nearly twenty years for his last big comics hit. *Prediction:* Rumours suggest it's better than it sounds.

☺ Frank Frazetta Fantasy Illustrated 1

Quantum Cat; various; $5.95

Is the world ready for another **Epic Illustrated** or **Heavy Metal** with a somewhat misleading, unwieldy and obscure title? Even Frazetta fans may be miffed to discover that Frank's only contribution is a reprint cover, and then only if you're lucky enough to get it and not Joseph Linsner's variant cover. Weird, or wot? *Prediction:* Will appeal to die-hard **Heavy Metal** fans and the over 40s (who have actually heard of Frazetta and are completists!).

☺ Gen^{12} #1

Image; Brandon Choi & Michael Ryan; $2.50

This one fills in the gaps between Team 7 and Gen^{13}. With **Gen^{13}** losing sales monthly, this could be an ill-timed tie-in but Ryan shows signs of casting off his Jim Lee influence and he could lift its sales. *Prediction:* A must for WildStorm continuity fans only.

☺ New Adventures of Abraham Lincoln

Homage; Scott McCloud; $19.95

From the man who brought us the seminal **Understanding Comics** and the posthumously acclaimed **Zot!**. A very unusual story about a magical Abraham Lincoln imposter and the return of the original "dead President". *Prediction:* Bloody expensive, and just what market is it aimed at anyway?

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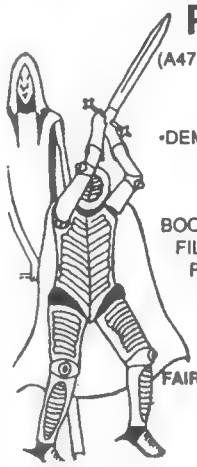

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Key to abbreviations used:
1 & 2 + 3 = Writer & penciller + inker
b&w = black & white content
hbk = hardback (book) edition
tpbk = trade paperback, squarebound, comic size

All comics are 32 page colour titles unless stated otherwise

SHIPPING: JAN – FEB 1998

AARDVARK-VANAHEIM

☐ **Cerebus 227** (Dave Sim & Gerhard) *Rick's Story, Part 8.* Rick heads off to the Starchild for his date, leaving Cerebus to worry about it. b&w 24pg $2.25

ABSTRACT STUDIO

☐ **Strangers in Paradise Gold Logo Edition Vol 2 #7** (Moore) Reprints. b&w 24pg $2.75

AC COMICS

NEW ☐ **All Hero Retro Comics Annual 1** (various) Golden Age hero reprints. 52pg b&w $6.95

☐ **Femforce: Darkgods Rampage 2** (of 3; Brad Gorby & Mark Heike) The Black Shroud strikes and the world is engulfed in madness and demon spawn. b&w 44pg $4.95

NEW ☐ **Secret Files of the Femforce Deluxe Edition** (Bill Black) Deluxe reprint. b&w $4.95

ACCLAIM COMICS

☐ **Bloodshot 12** (Len Kaminski & Sal Velluto + Bob Almond) Warcat is sent to destroy Bloodshot, but falls in love with him... ..... $2.50

☐ **Darque Passages 3** (of 4; Christina Z & Leonardo Manco) Alexandre Darque is threatened by evil twins, Lydon and Lanston. $2.50

☐ **Dr Tomorrow 10** (of 12; Bob Layton & Anthony Williams) The Doctor's public image is damaged by an unauthorised biography written by his daughter. $2.50

☐ **Magnus 14** (Tom Peyer & Axel Gimenez) Magnus is crowned king of Albania, but things get worse from there onwards. $2.50

☐ **Quantum & Woody 13** (Christopher Priest & Mark Bright + Greg Adams) Quantum and Woody's normal bodies are restored. $2.50

☐ **Shadowman 16** (Serge Clermont & Klayton Krain + Temujin) A new direction for Shadowman as he goes in search of his destiny. $2.50

CANCELLED ☐ **Trinity Angels 12** (Kevin Maguire) The trio faces the ultimate threat when only two members stand against the entire enclave of 99. .... $2.50

☐ **Troublemakers 15** (Fabian Nicieza & Kevin West) Is Parker Matthews alive or dead? The 'Makers want to know and no one is going to stop them. $2.50

ONE-SHOT ☐ **Turok: Dinosaur Hunter** (Fabian Nicieza & Rafe Kayanan; tpbk) Reprint collection. 112pg $9.95

☐ **X-O Manowar 17** (Dwayne McDuffie & Scot Eaton) X-O is faced with a dilemma: should he help R.A.G.E against an alien bounty hunter or not? .. $2.50

AGE

NEW ☐ **Adventures of Hercules 1** (Sam Glanzman) Reprints of the Charlton series. b&w ... $2.95

NEW ☐ **Barbarians 1** (Jeff Jones + Mike Kaluta + Wayne Howard) Tales of sword and sorcery featuring early work of Jones and Kaluta. b&w $2.95

NEW ☐ **UFO 1** (Steve Ditko + Jim Aparo + Pat Boyette) A collection of classic "first contact" tales. b&w $2.95

AIRPLANE MAINTENANCE

☐ **Caffeine 9** (Jim Hill) Dorion and Rasputin have been kidnapped by gun-toting porn stars on their way to kill the President. b&w 24pg ... $2.95

ONE-SHOT ☐ **Abel Graphic Novel** (William Harmes & Mark Bloodworth) A story of racism, betrayal and murder set in Nebraska during World War II. 96pg b&w $14.95

☐ **Everwinds 4** (Steve Peters) Special Valentine's day issue. 24pg b&w $2.95

☐ **Iliad 3** (Darren Brady & Alex Ogle) Comics adaptation of Homer's tome. b&w 24pg $2.95

NEW ☐ **Lenore 1** (Roman Dirge) Cuteness and creepiness with humour and pathos. b&w 24pg $2.95

☐ **Mister Blank 5** (Chris Hicks) Sam Smith pursues the assassin of the army of robotic incogs who now carrys a piece of Doctor Ixcel's most intimate technology to the city. b&w 24pg ... $2.95

☐ **Patty Cake 4** (Scott Roberts) Patty-Cake and Sis go to lunch with their Dad. b&w ... $2.95

☐ **Phoenix Square 3** (Paul Barlow) Starring a 19th Century lager lout. 24pg b&w .. $2.95

ONE-SHOT ☐ **Skeleton Key Special** (Andi Watson) Collection of short stories and selected stuff. b&w 16pg $1.75

☐ **Squee 4** (Jhonen Vasquez) Squee learns that his friends are all zombies. b&w 24pg .. $2.95

ANTARCTIC PRESS

☐ **Box Office Poison 8** (Alex Robinson) Mrs Tweed has a heart attack. b&w Mature.$2.95

NEW ☐ **Gold Digger Beta 1** (Fred Perry) The archaeologists discover an ancient city under the Nevada desert. 24pg $2.95

ONE-SHOT ☐ **Gold Digger Minus Eighteen Special 1** (Fred Perry) Early tales of Gina and Cheetah's childhood. b&w 24pg ... $2.95

☐ **Gold Digger Volume 7** (Fred Perry; tpbk) Reprint collection. 104pg b&w $10.95

ONE-SHOT ☐ **Luftwaffe 1946 Technical Manual Volume 1** (Ted Nomura) All you wanted to know about the machinery in this alternate reality. b&w 48pg $3.95

☐ **Ninja High School 61** (Herb Mallette & Steven Henry) Ichi and Arnie's quest continues. b&w $2.95

☐ **Redeemers 2** (of 5; Herb Mallette & Dixy Blaine & Dery) A routine investigation leads the team to Hades. 24pg ... $2.95

☐ **Robotech: Vermillion 4** (of 4; Duc Tran) Rick and Lena search attempt to sabotage the Zentraedi ship. 24pg b&w $2.95

☐ **Warrior Nun Black and White 7** (Kelsey Shannon & Shannon Gallant) A story featuring Sister Shannon. (Huh!?) 24pg b&w $2.95

ARCHIE COMICS

☐ **Archie 471** (various) . $1.75

☐ **Archie Andrews Where Are You? Digest 114** (various)$1.95

☐ **Archie's Double Digest 99** (various) $2.95

☐ **Betty 61** (various) .. $1.75

☐ **Betty & Veronica 123** (various) $1.75

☐ **Betty & Veronica Spectacular 29** (various) ... $1.75

☐ **Cheryl Blossom 12** (various) $1.75

☐ **Jughead 104** (Bill Golliher & Stan Goldberg) $1.75

☐ **Jughead's with Archie Digest 140** (various) ... $1.95

☐ **Knuckles 12** (Ken Penders & Manny Galan) $1.75

☐ **Pals & Gals Double Digest 32** (various) $2.95

☐ **Sabrina the Teenage Witch 13** (Golliher & DeCarlo) $1.75

☐ **Sonic the Hedgehog 58** (Penders & Mawhinney) $1.75

☐ **Veronica 75** (Goldberg)$1.75

AWESOME

☐ **Coven 6** (Ian Churchill & Jeph Loeb) Goblins are running amok in New Orleans and the Coven goes to investigate. $2.50

☐ **Fighting American: Rules of the Game 3** (Jeph Loeb & Ed McGuiness) The Fighting American wants to know who's put a multi-million dollar bounty on his head. $2.50

☐ **Kaboom 4** (Jeff matsuda & Jeph Loeb) Geof journeys *inside* the Kaboom gloves. $2.50

☐ **Scarlet Crush 2** (John Stinsman) Icaria continues with her search for Dr Levine. $2.50

☐ **Supreme 57** (Alan Moore & Chris Sprouse) Korgo has gained control of the White House$2.99

NEW ☐ **Youngblood 1** (Alan Moore & Steve Skroce) Unveiling an unfamiliar, revamped Youngblood team. $2.50

BONGO COMICS

☐ **Simpson Comics 35** (Bill Morrison & Melvyn Rubinstein) Marge takes on a job: minding the children from hell. . $2.25

CALIBER PRESS

ONE-SHOT ☐ **Caliber Hardcover Library Series: Bandy Man** (Jill Thompson & Stefan Petrucha + Charlie Adlard + Miran Kim; thbk) Special edition collecting

the mini-series. 96pg. Regular b&w $19.95
Deluxe b&w $39.95

NEW ☐ **Hanged Man 1 & 2** (of 2; Alan Grant & Arthur Ranson) Adam Cadman is the first man to be hanged in Britain for 30 years. As he hangs from the noose he travels mysteriously to a strange place called Mazeworld. b&w . $2.95

ONE-SHOT ☐ **Kingdom of the Wicked** (Ian Edgington & D'Israeli; thbk) Hardback collecting all four issues. b&w 112pg $49.95

NEW ☐ **Lemon Custard 1** (Mark Badger) Meet Sklerite, a man who has met his inner Jurassic frog!? b&w $2.95

☐ **Lifequest 2** (Matt Vanderpol) The beginning of the process to restore the planet to its former glory. b&w $2.95

☐ **Maze Agency 2** (Mike Barr & Jose Gonzalez) Mays and Webb are stranded in a monastery. b&w $2.95

☐ **Race of Scorpions 2** (Leo Duranona) Representing the series which debuted at Dark Horse. b&w $2.95

☐ **Saint Germaine 8** (Gary Reed & Vincent Locke) Saint Germaine narrates a tale from his youth. b&w $2.95

NEW ☐ **Seeker 1** (Gary Reed & Werty Massarotto + Norbert Pertzborn) The story of a modern day incarnation of an ancient warrior. b&w .. $2.95

☐ **Technopolis 3** (Adrie VanViersen & Patrick Saurial) Madison and Vienna face the greatest threat humanity has ever had. b&w $2.95

CATALOG BOOKS

☐ **Bone Volume Two: The Great Cow Race** (Jeff Smith; tpbk) Two versions of the award winning trade paperback. b&w
Regular $14.95
Deluxe hardcover $22.95

CHAOS COMICS

☐ **Cryptic Writings of Megadeth 3** (*Chaos! Rocks:* Brian Pulido & J+D Monti) More rock musings. $2.95

☐ **Evil Ernie: Destroyer 6** (of 9; Brian Pulido & Kyle Hotz + Tim Bradstreet) Ernie has his finger on the button and the world is gripped by the threat of destruction. $2.95

☐ **Lady Death 2** (Brian Pulido & Steven Hughes) Lady Death returns to Hell to claim her sovereignty. $2.95

☐ **The Lost 4** (*Breakthrough Entertainment:* of 4; Marc Andreyko + Jay Geldhof + P. Craig Russell) The final battle between Peter Pan and Captain Hook. b&w $2.95

CRUSADE

NEW ☐ **Shi: Masquerade 1** (Chris Golden + Tom Sniegoski & Ray Lago) Shi encounters the mysterious Pan – a vigilante with hooves and horns. $3.50

☐ **Shi: The Series 7** (Tony Bedard & Kevin Lau) Shi has to save the life of the sleazy photographer who has exposed her and her order. $2.95

DARK HORSE

ONE-SHOT ☐ **Aliens: Harvest** (Jerry Prosser & Kelley Jones; tpbk) Formerly collected as **Aliens: Hive**, this is the latest "remastered" Aliens book. 120pg *[04/02/98]* $16.95

☐ **Aliens: Kidnapped 3** (of 3; Jim Woodring + Justin Green & Francisco Solano Lopez) How do you deal with an alien plague? The inhabitants of the planet Celeste take care of aliens with good old-fashioned nuclear weapons, unaware that the aliens are spreading a fatal airborn virus like wildfire. 24pg *[18/02/98]* $2.50

NEW ☐ **Aliens: Survival 1** (of 3; James Vance & Guy Davis) Thompson, a geological surveyor on a remote planet, has the perfect life: a loving wife, a son in little league, even a pesky neighbour. The problem is, Thompson's life may be just a dream. The reality may be that he's trapped underground in an escape pod with hours to live. And, creatures with claws and acid blood are pounding on the door... *[11/02/98]* $2.95

☐ **Dark Horse Presents 129** (Kelley Jones + Dave Cooper + Shane Oakley + Jim Mahfood) Anthology title featuring **Kelley Jones' Hammer** and three other stories. Mature readers. b&w *[11/02/98]* $2.95

☐ **Edgar Rice Burroughs' Tarzan 19** (Tim Truman & Thomas Yeates + Al Williamson) Tarzan is captured, but Korak himself catches the daughter of Ortiz and she may provide the key: both to Tarzan's rescue, and to the defeat of the lunar invaders. *[04/02/98]* ... $2.95

☐ **Egon 2** (of 2) (Tatjana & Alberto Ponticelli; cover by Alex Horley) Egon's got trouble and his name is Santo! An assassin working for Inferno Enterprises, Santo has been hired to kill Egon. Any normal man would be worried, but Egon is no normal man! Mature. *[04/02/98]* $2.95

☐ **Ghost 34** (Eric Luke & Ivan Reis + Randy Emberlin) Ghost, mourned for her sister when she died. But now, suddenly and inexplicably, Margo has returned from the dead – exhibiting the same powers as Ghost! *[18/02/98]* $2.95

ONE-SHOT ☐ **Godzilla: Age of Monsters** (various; tpbk) Collection of Dark Horse's "big green destroyer of Tokyo" stories. 272pg 6" x 9" b&w *[18/02/98]* $17.95

☐ **Hypersonic 4** (of 4; Steve White + Dan Abnett & Gary Erskine) The Man in Black tells all and the conspiracy is revealed! But will it be enough to save Wesley as he goes head-to-head with another alien hybrid fighter? *[18/02/98]* $2.95

☐ **Land of Nod 3** (of 4; Jay Stephens) Superhero comics, especially those featuring eight-year-olds, usually have happy endings, right? Wrong! b&w 24pg *[18/02/98]* $2.95

NEW ☐ **Mask/Marshal Law 1** (of 2; Pat Mills & Kevin O'Neill) Marshal Law is ready to give up his war against superheroes. That is until the Sleepman – his most hated enemy who murdered his girlfriend – gets hold of the Mask and unleashes murder and mayhem across the Bay. *[25/02/98]* $2.95

ONE-SHOT ☐ **Predator: Hell & Hot Water** (Mark Schultz & Gene Colan + Gregory Wright; tpbk) Collecting the three-issue series. 88pg *[08/02/98]* $9.95

NEW ☐ **Predator: Hell Come a Walkin' 1** (of 2; Nancy Collins & Dean Ormston) It's civil war and a nation is divided against itself... Providing perfect hunting grounds for a deadly predator. *[25/02/98]* $2.95

☐ **Red Rocket 7 #6** (of 7; Mike Allred) Clones, aliens, and rock 'n' roll abound when all of the story elements come together and the clues of the past join the universal revelations of the future. 24pg *[18/02/98]* . $3.95

☐ **Sergio Aragones' Groo 2** (of 4; Sergio Aragones w/ Mark Evanier) Groo faces off with two of his oldest and most vile foes: Arba and Dacarba – two witches very much confused by the stupid barbarian's newfound intelligence. *[25/02/98]* . $2.95

ONE-SHOT ☐ **Superman/Madman: Hullabaloo!** (Mike Allred + Laura Allred; tpbk) Collecting the mini-series. 96pg *[11/02/98]* $8.95

☐ **Usagi Yojimbo 18** (Stan Sakai) Gen has a decision to make: to go after the injured Inazuma for her reward, or to search for Usagi. b&w *[25/02/98]* $2.95

ONE-SHOT ☐ **Usagi Yojimbo: Daisho** (Stan Sakai; tpbk) A collection of the out-of-print issues originally published by Mirage. 200pg b&w *[25/02/98]* $14.95
Limited edition hardback w/dust jacket; signed, numbered and illustrated plate $49.95

☐ **Zombieworld: Dead End 2** (of 2; Stephen Blue) Locked up safe inside from the marauding zombies, Lisa is faced with another threat from within the house. *[11/02/98]* $2.95

Dark Horse manga titles

NEW ☐ **Drakuun: Shadow of the Warlock 1** (of 6; Johji Manabe) If Romunilian Supreme Warlock General Kurgh thinks he can control Princess Karula, he'd better think again. The Warrior Princess has tricks of her own up her sleeve, and Kurgh's magical sword in her hands. Mature readers. b&w *[11/02/98]* $2.95

☐ **Gunsmith Cats: Goldie vs Misty 4** (of 7; Kenichi Sonoda) The vicious Italian hitwoman has brought Misty along to trade for the incriminating Mafia tapes. Mature. *[04/02/98]* $2.95

☐ **The Legend of Mother Sarah: City of the Angels 4** (of 9; Katsuhiro Otomo and Takumi Nagayasu) Sarah meets her long-lost daughter, but the reunion is not a pleasant one. Mature. b&w 48pg *[25/02/98]* $3.95

☐ **Oh My Goddess!: Ninja Master! 2** (of 2; Kosuke Fujishima) Kodama has given up the life of a ninja to follow the goddess Belldandy. b&w 48pg *[18/02/98]* $3.95

☐ **The Two Faces of Tomorrow 7** (of 13; Yukinobu Hoshino) All previous attempts to shut down the super-computer have failed. The scientists have to resort to the military option, using Marines and "anti-drones" to physically attack the machine. b&w 48pg *[04/02/98]* .. $3.95

** Legend imprint*

☐ **Concrete: Strange Armor 3** (of 5; Paul Chadwick) Fed up with the NSA, feeling as trapped by the scientists as he did by the aliens who transplanted his brain into his stone body, Ron Lithgow concocts a plan... *[25/02/98]* $2.95

☐ **Martha Washington Saves the World 3** (of 3; Frank Miller & Dave Gibbons) First, Martha was lied to, then, she was brainwashed. Now, she's stuck on a ship with a bunch of dinosaurs! 48pg *[25/02/98]* . $3.95

Star Wars licenced titles

☐ **Star Wars: Crimson Empire 3** (of 6; Mike Richardson + Randy Stradley & Paul Gulacy + P. Craig Russell) Sinn's band of

Rebels is under siege by the Empire as its hideout is discovered. And who should come to the rescue but Kir Kanos, the last member of the Crimson Guard! *[18/02/98]* $2.95

ONE-SHOT ☐ **Star Wars: Dark Force Rising** (Mike Baron & Terry Dodson + Kevin Nowlan; tpbk) Collecting the mini-series. 160pg *[04/02/98]* $17.95

☐ **Star Wars: The Last Command 3** (of 6; Mike Baron & Edvin Biukovic + Eric Shanower + Pamela Rambo) The scheming smugglers; Mara Jade's mysterious past; Grand Admiral Thrawn's plans for using clones to help defeat the New Republic and Leia's growing concern for the protection of her twins. *[04/02/98]* $2.95

NEW ☐ **Star Wars: Shadows of the Empire – Evolution 1** (of 5; Steve Perry & Ron Randall + Tom Simmons) Xizor, the leader of the Black Sun organization, has been destroyed, and Guri – a human replica droid and Xizor's personal assassin – is left wondering what her future will hold now that she no longer has anyone to answer to. *[11/02/98]* $2.95

☐ **Star Wars: X-Wing Rogue Squadron - Family Ties 2** (of 2; Michael Stackpole & Jim Hall + Drew Johnson + Gary Martin) Corellia may have somehow managed to avoid the devastating war between the Empire and the Rebel Alliance, but the back streets of Coronet City have their own brand of villains, and Rogue Squadron can be as heroic on the ground as it is in the sky! *[04/02/98]* $2.95

DC COMICS

Batman Family

☐ **Azrael 40** (Dennis O'Neil & Roger Robinson + James Pascoe) After defeating both Bane and an addiction to the drug known as Venom, Azrael makes his triumphant return to Gotham City... just in time for the quake! *[11/02/98]* $1.95

☐ **Batman 553** (Doug Moench & Klaus Janson + Sal Buscema) Batman seeks a way out of the Batcave as Alfred lies pinned beneath the wreckage of Wayne Manor. Commissioner Gordon is also pinned – in his office, under the Bat-signal. *[11/02/98]* $1.95

☐ **Batman Adventures: The Lost Years 4** (of 5; Hilary J. Bader & Bo Hampton + Terry Beatty) Learn the full story of Tim Drake's life before he became the newest Robin. *[18/02/98]* $1.95

☐ **Batman: Bane of the Demon 2** (of 4; Chuck Dixon & Graham Nolan + Tom Palmer) Bane meets Talia, the demon's daughter, and there's instant chemistry between the two. But Ra's is wary of this new potential suitor. *[04/02/98]* $1.95

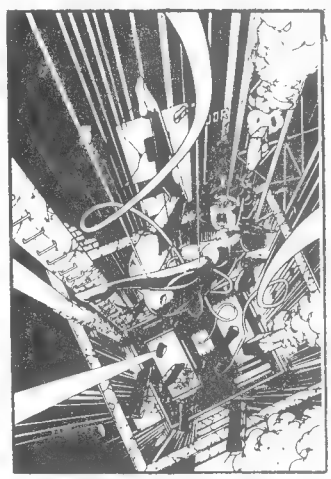
ONE-SHOT ☐ **Batman: Blackgate – Isle of Men 1** (Doug Moench & Jim Aparo + David Roach) The earthquake frees some of Gotham's most dangerous criminals. When the quake hits, the lower levels of Blackgate Prison are flooded, and dozens of violent villains must be released from their cells to avoid certain death. 48pg *[25/02/98]* £2.95

ONE-SHOT ☐ **Batman: Four of a Kind** (tpbk; various) Collection of the Dark Knight's first encounters with some of his greatest foes. 208pg *[25/03/98]* $14.95

☐ **Batman: Legends of the Dark Knight 105** (C.J. Henderson & Trevor Von Eeden + Josef Rubinstein) When the Dark Knight is away, the Joker will play, brazenly attacking Gotham's citizens during the day. *[25/02/98]* $1.95

☐ **Batman: Shadow of the Bat 73** (Alan Grant & Mark Buckingham + Wayne Faucher) An earthquake rocks Gotham leaving Batman and Alfred trapped in the cave, with every exit blocked and the mansion falling down on top of them. *[04/02/98]* $1.95

☐ **Catwoman 56** (Devin K. Grayson & Jim Balent + John Stanisci) Catwoman is trapped in a collapsing department store torn between her need to avoid capture and a desire to help the people who will die if she leaves them. *[18/02/98]* $1.95



☐ **Chase 3** (D. Curtis Johnson & J. H. Williams, III, + Mick Gray) Chase comes face to face with the Rocket Reds, now run by the Russian mob. *[18/02/98]* $2.50

☐ **Detective Comics 720** (Chuck Dixon & Graham Nolan + Klaus Janson) Batman must swim the length of an underwater tunnel to escape the ruins of the Batcave and get help for Alfred. But will there be anything left of Gotham when (or if) he emerges? *[18/02/98]* $1.95

☐ **Nightwing 19** (Chuck Dixon & Scott McDaniel + Karl Story) Hearing news of the devastating quake in Gotham, Nightwing races to the scene by water, the only means of reaching the heart of the city. *[04/02/98]* . $1.95

☐ **Robin 52** (Chuck Dixon & Staz Johnson + Stan Woch) Tim Drake's European adventure concludes as Robin faces both King Snake and Lady Shiva before returning to Gotham! *[25/02/98]* $1.95

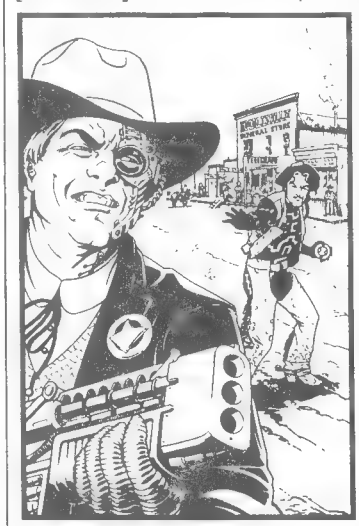
ONE-SHOT ☐ **Thrillkillers '62** (Howard Chaykin & Dan Brereton) Batgirl Barbara Gordon, still reeling from Dick Grayson's death, has teamed with renegade police detective Bruce Wayne, now known as Batman. But when Dick's killer, the Joker, returns to become the new crimelord of Gotham City, will Barbara's desire for revenge mean the end of the Dynamic Duo? 48pg *[25/02/98]* $4.95

DC Universe

☐ **Adventures in the DC Universe 13** (Steve Vance & John Delaney + Ron Boyd) When a local Manchester band makes the big time, Bart runs off to New York to check out the debut – and gets caught in the crossfire of a show-biz shoot-out. *[18/02/98]* $1.95

☐ **Aquaman 43** (Peter David & J. Calafiore + P. L. Palmiotti) Superman Red and Aquaman battle Cerne, the Celtic giant who's heading right toward the Atlantean city of Thierna Na Oge. *[18/02/98]* $1.95

☐ **Chronos 2** (John Francis Moore & Paul Guinan + Steve Leialoha) Stranded in the Wild West, time traveller Walker Gabriel finds allies from a most unexpected source: the Kents! *[04/02/98]* $2.50



☐ **Challengers of the Unknown 15** (Steven D. Grant & Ryan Sook + Bill Reinhold) Superman guests. The Challengers team investigates an event stranger than any it's encountered to date as a 1000-foot giant rises from the ocean depths! *[18/02/98]* $2.50

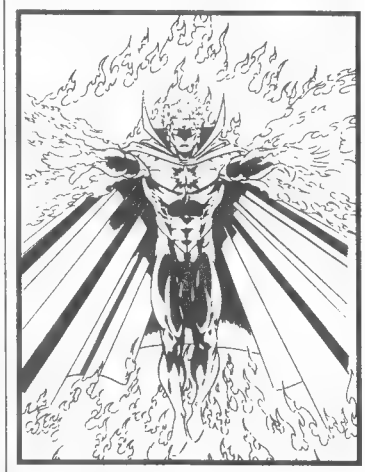
☐ **Creeper 5** (Len Kaminski & Shawn Martinbrough and Sal Buscema) Jack Ryder gets a job, which is good news for him, but bad news for the people who hired him. *[11/02/98]* . $2.50

☐ **Flash 136** (Grant Morrison + Mark Millar & Paul Ryan + John Nyberg) A powerful alien entity amuses himself by pitting the fastest beings in the universe against one another in races through space and time. At stake: the lives of the racer's homeworlds! *[25/02/98]* $1.95

☐ **Green Arrow 131** (Chuck Dixon & Dougie Braithwaite + Robin Riggs) Crackshot returns! She's still got the hots for Connor and wants to join the superhero biz... as both his partner and his lover! *[11/02/98]* $2.50

☐ **Green Lantern 97** (Ron Marz & Mike McKone + Terry Austin) Darkseid's illegitimate son, Grayven, returns from the grave to wreak havok upon Green Lantern. *[04/02/98]* ... $1.95

☐ **Green Lantern & Sentinel: Heart of Darkness 2** (of 3; Ron Marz & Paul Pelletier + Dan Davis) As the search for the missing Jade continues, GL and Sentinel must face Obsidian, Alan Scott's son. Once a hero, Obsidian's shadowy powers have been corrupted by the entity that is the source of Sentinel's powers – Starheart! *[18/02/98]* $1.95



☐ **Hitman 25** (Garth Ennis & John McCrea + Garry Leach) With his uncle Sean kidnapped by the elite SAS hit-team, Tommy and Natt have only one choice: declare war on Men's Room Louie, and draw his gang into a fight to the death with the SAS boys. *[25/02/98]* .. $2.25

ONE-SHOT ☐ **Hitman: Ten Thousand Bullets** (Garth Ennis & John McCrea; tpbk) Collecting issues 4-8 of the popular series. 112pg. *[18/02/98]* $9.95

☐ **Impulse 36** (William Messner-Loebs & Craig Rousseau + Barbara Kaalberg) Impulse and friends keep their court dates as the toxic waste dumpers are brought to trial in Manchester. *[11/02/98]* $1.95

☐ **Jack Kirby's Fourth World 14** (John Byrne & Ron Wagner + Ray Kryssing; cover by Walter Simonson) Metron and DeSaad seek a way to convince the

Promethean Giant to take Darkseid's place on the Source Wall, a task made almost impossible by the giant's existence on a time line incomprehensible to even the gods. *[11/02/98]* $1.95

☐ **JLA 17** (Grant Morrison & Howard Porter + John Dell) He's taken out Batman, he's taken down Superman, now he's draining the air out of the JLA Watchtower. And the lives of all his hostages, including reporter Lois Lane, hang in the balance. Can the new line-up of the JLA possibly beat Prometheus? *[25/02/98]* $1.95

☐ **JLA: Year One 4** (of 12; Mark Waid + Brian Augustyn & Barry Kitson) The threat of the secret organization known as Locus continues to mount. *[11/02/98]* $1.95

☐ **Legends of the Legion 3** (of 4; Barry Kitson + Tom Peyer & Kenny Martinez + Annibal Rodriguez) The prior lives of the Legionnaires. *[18/02/98]* $2.25

☐ **Legion of Super-Heroes 103** (Tom Peyer + Tom McCraw & Jason Armstrong + Ron Boyd; cover by Alan Davis) Things are popping all over the galaxy! Star Boy and the group on Xanthu are in deep trouble when they're ambushed by two evil alien races while trying to save the planet from coming under the control of a third! *[25/02/98]* $2.25

☐ **Legionnaires 59** (Roger Stern + Tom McCraw & Jeffrey Moy + W. C. Carani) Just in time for Valentine's Day, it's date night! Cham's the toast of Metropolis with not one, but two hot young ladies on his arms. Meanwhile, a number of LS-Hers hit the beach; a romance blossoms in the heart of the space anomaly; Invisible Kid is out to meet a mysterious someone; and one Legionnaire is stuck at HQ all alone. *[11/02/98]* $2.25

SPECIAL ☐ **Lobo 50** (Alan Grant & Carl Critchlow + Mark Propst) For his special 50th issue, Lobo declares war on the entire DCU! It's a fight to the fraggin' finish, as the Main Man slaughters Superman and the JLA, the Legion of Super-Heroes, all the New Gods, the Sovereign Seven and Starman! *[18/02/98]* .. $2.25

☐ **Major Bummer 9** (John Arcudi & Doug Mahnke) Irreverent superhero humour and satire. *[18/02/98]* . $2.50

☐ **The Man Called A*X #7** (Marv Wolfman & Shawn McManus + Norm Rapmund) The battle in Bedlam escalates to a fever pitch when Bradbury releases hundreds of mindless, ruthless bloodthirsty assassin androids – all with powers equal to A*X's! *[04/02/98]* ... $2.50

☐ **Power of Shazam! 37** (Jerry Ordway & Mike Manley + Dick Giordano) The focus is on Captain Marvel Jr as the nightmare that is Dr Morpheus forces the young Marvel to face his fears! *[04/02/98]* ... $1.95

☐ **Resurrection Man 12** (Dan Abnett + Andy Lanning & Butch Guice) Mitch and his evil twin, Hooker, have their long-awaited showdown as Hooker finally gets what he has wanted all along: a piece of Resurrection Man's power. *[18/02/98]* $2.50

☐ **Sovereign Seven 33** (Chris Claremont & Ron Lim + Chris Ivy) S7's trip to Russia concludes as the team battles the Warboys. *[11/02/98]* $2.25

☐ **Starman 41** (James Robinson & Gary Erskine) The Shade and O'Dare cut through Opal City's seedy underworld to protect the secrets of Matt's criminal past. To what lengths are they willing to go to keep his dark secrets? and how far will Hope O'Dare let them go? *[04/02/98]* ... $2.25

ONE-SHOT ☐ **Starman Secret Files 1** (James Robinson & Tony Harris + Lee Weeks + Phil Jimenez + Wade Von Grawbadger + various) The history of the men who have called themselves Starman, revealing new details about the life of Jack Knight. 48pg *[11/02/98]* $4.95

☐ **Wonder Woman 132** (John Byrne) The Justice Society guest stars. Wonder Woman and the JSA pursue Dark Angel back to occupied Europe, where the Nazis are just a nuisance compared to the demonic forces the ageless witch has at her disposal. *[25/02/98]* ... $1.95

☐ **Teen Titans 19** (Dan Jurgens & Norm Rapmund) Superman Red guest stars as the Millennium Giants' threat continues! The Man of Energy is sinking fast as Tempest rushes to his rescue. *[25/02/98]* $1.95

CANCELLED ☐ **Xero 12** (Christopher J. Priest & ChrisCross + Tom Simmons) Xero is dead, having given his life to protect an unknowing public from the very men he served. 20 years later, his brother will reveal Xero's story to the world... or die trying! *[25/02/98]* $1.95

☐ **Young Heroes in Love 11** (Dan Raspler & Dev Madan + Keith Champagne) Grundo'mu continues to batter the Young Heroes senseless as he rampages through South America. *[18/02/98]* $1.95

Licenced properties

☐ **Animaniacs 36** (various & Leo Batic + Scott McRae) When Dr Scratchansniff has to buy the latest pair of designer jeans, the Warner Brothers and their sister Dot tag along. *[11/02/98]* $1.95

☐ **Babylon 5: In Valen's Name 2** (of 3; Peter David w/J. Michael Straczynski & Michael Collins + David Roach) Trapped aboard the abandoned Babylon 4 station as it plummets into the atmosphere of the planet it orbits, Delenn discovers the history of Valen. Meanwhile, Sheridan and Garibaldi find a ship to use as a way off the station. *[18/02/98]* $2.50

☐ **Cartoon Network Presents 9 – Toonami** (Matt Wayne + Michael Kraiger & Graham Manley, Joe Brozowski + various) More animated TV antics. *[18/02/98]* $1.95

☐ **The Flintstones and The Jetsons 9** (Matt Wayne + Sam Henderson & Bill Alger, Mike DeCarlo + Stephanie Gladden) Animated adventure anthology. *[04/02/98]* $1.95

☐ **Gross Point 10** (Matt Wayne & Joe Staton + Roger Langridge) Howard Pickett's accidental business coup gets him named Businessman of the Year by the Gross Point Chamber of Commerce. *[25/02/98]* $2.50

☐ **Looney Tunes 39** (various & various) Animated fun, Warner Bros style. *[25/02/98]* . $1.95

☐ **Mad 367** (the Usual Gang of Idiots) 48pg b&w Humour comic magazine. *[11/02/98]* .. $2.50

☐ **Mad Super Special 127** (Usual Gang of Idiots) b&w 80pg. Magazine *[18/02/98]* .. $3.99

☐ **Pinky and the Brain 22** (Jesse Leon McCann & Walter Carzon + various) Snowball the nefarious hamster locks The Brain in an iron mas, in an attempt to steal Brain's identity and conquer the world. *[04/02/98]* $1.95

☐ **Scooby-Doo 9** (Terrance Griep Jr + Chris Duffy & Bob Smith + Tim Harkins) The Mystery Inc gang travels to New Orleans for Mardi Gras and runs straight into a voodoo hoodoo. *[11/02/98]* $1.95

Superman Family

☐ **Action Comics 743** (Stuart Immonen & Greg Land + Jose Marzan) Superman Blue teams up with a character from DC's Golden Age: Slam Bradley! Meanwhile, Superman Red is up against the man of mystery who calls himself The Skin Man. *[11/02/98]* $1.95

☐ **Adventures of Superman 556** (Karl Kesel & Tom Grummett + Ron Frenz + Denis Rodier + Josef Rubinstein) Superman Red confronts the harbingers of doom known as the Millennium Guard, while Superman Blue defends Jimmy Olsen and Misa against Gargox: a really big monster! *[04/02/98]* $1.95

☐ **The Kents 9** (of 12; John Ostrander & Tom Mandrake) The year is 1866 and the bloody civil war is finally over. The expansion towards the West continues as the massive cattle drives begin. Jeb Kent rides with Jesse James as the infamous criminal's career takes off. *[4/02/98]* $2.50

☐ **Legends of the DC Universe 3** (James Robinson & Val Semeiks + Paul Neary) The U.L.T.R.A.-Humanite has made enemies of both Lex Luthor and Superman! *[11/02/98]* . $1.95

☐ **Steel 49** (Christopher J. Priest & Denys Cowan + Tom Palmer) John Irons has to deliver a heart for someone awaiting a vital operation. *[04/02/98]* $2.50

SPECIAL ☐ **Superboy 50** (Karl Kesel & Tom Grummett) A special anniversary issue. Part 1 of the 4-part *The Last Boy On Earth!*, Superboy finds himself in a mysterious, seemingly time-lost land, with no memory of who he is. All he knows is that he's fighting for his life in an abandoned outpost called "Command D" and that the beings hunting him are strange mutated animals which talk and act like people.

[18/02/98] $1.95

☐ **Supergirl 20** (Peter David & Leonard Kirk + Cam Smith) With the threat of the Millennium Giants looming, Supergirl enters the fray. Can her altered powers defeat the Giants where the combined might of Superman Red and Superman Blue, the Teen Titans, the Challengers of the Unknown and Aquaman has failed? *[25/02/98]* $1.95

☐ **Superman 134** (Dan Jurgens & Ron Frenz + Josef Rubinstein) The Millennium Giants plan to ready the Earth for the next 1,000 years of living things... by destroying every trace of the last 1,000! *[25/02/98]* $1.95

☐ **Superman: The Man of Steel 78** (Jon Bogdanove + Louise Simonson & Bogdanove + Dennis Janke) They're as old as the Earth itself... The Millennium Giants have come to cleanse and renew the world... by destroying everything on it! Two Supermen go up against this truly enormous menace, but do even they have enough power? *[18/02/98]* $1.95

☐ **Superman Adventures 18** (Devin K. Grayson & Aluir Amancio + Terry Austin) Should Clark Kent quit his day job? It seems like it lately, as Superman's heroic duties have kept Clark from landing scoops for quite a while and Perry White is losing his patience. *[11/02/98]* $1.95

ONE-SHOT ☐ **Superman Transformed!** (various; tpbk) The Man of Steel's efforts to regain his powers after the events of *The Final Night* and his subsequent controversial transformation into the Man of Energy are collected in a single volume. 7"x10" 208pg *[28/01/98]* $12.95

Helix science fiction

☐ **Michael Moorcock's Multiverse 6** (of 12; Michael Moorcock & Walter Simonson + Mark Reeve + John Ridgway) Three different stories set in three different parts of the Multiverse. Mature readers. *[18/02/98]* $2.50

☐ **Transmetropolitan 8** (Warren Ellis & Darick Robertson + Rodney Ramos) Spider Jerusalem, outlaw journalist, walks with the Revivals – people who have come out from cryogenic freeze into a world they don't understand and a city that has forgotten them completely. *[11/02/98]* . $2.50

ONE-SHOT ☐ **Transmetropolitan: Back on the Street** (Warren Ellis & Darick Robertson; tpbk) Reprinting the first three issues. Mature readers. 96pg *[28/01/98]* $7.95

Vertigo mature titles

☐ **Books of Magic 47** (John Ney Rieber & Peter Gross + Richard Case) The war between Heaven and Hell escalates. Hell has made a bloodthirsty monster of his father, Heaven has turned his stepbrother into a murderous saint, and his new stepmother would be giving Tim Hunter the grounding of his life – if she weren't transformed into solid chocolate. *[11/02/98]* .. $2.50

☐ **The Dreaming 23** (Caitlin R. Kiernan & Paul Lee; cover by Dave McKean) Eve leaves the safety of her cave in the Dreaming in order to look for Matthew in the waking world. *[18/02/98]* $2.50

☐ **Essential Vertigo: The Sandman 21** (Neil Gaiman & Mike Dringenberg + Malcolm Jones III; cover by Dave McKean) Reprinting *Season of Mists*. *[04/02/98]* $1.95

☐ **Essential Vertigo: Swamp Thing 18** (Alan Moore & Rick Veitch + John Totleben) Reprint. b&w 24pg *[11/02/98]* .. $2.25

☐ **Hellblazer 124** (Paul Jenkins & Warren Pleece) The clue to beating the Devil – and the answer to saving Dani's brothers – is in sight. *[25/02/98]* $2.25

☐ **House of Secrets 18** (Steven T. Seagle & Teddy Kristiansen) Back in Seattle, the House of Secrets is hungry for its witness; private detective Nick Calderone is closing in on his prey and the Seattle police are eager to question the squatter in a peculiar hill-top mansion. *[11/02/98]* $2.50

☐ **Invisibles Volume 2 #14** (Grant Morrison & Chris Weston + Stokes; cover by Brian Bolland) The team sorts through the aftermath of its battle with the Archons and the devastation wreaked by mystical Hand of Glory. *[25/02/98]* $2.50

☐ **Neil Gaiman & Charles Vess' Stardust 4** (of 4; Neil Gaiman & Charles Vess) Tristran Thorn and the star forge their way back to Wall with the enraged Witch Queen and the seventh and most cunning Lord of Stormhold locked in relentless pursuit. *[28/01/98]* $5.95

☐ **Preacher 36** (Garth Ennis & Steve Dillon; cover by Glenn Fabry) Starr springs his trap; Jesse takes his life in his hands; the Saint of Killers loses his sense of humour and Tulip learns whether she can get by with just a pretty face. *[04/02/98]* $2.50

ONE-SHOT ☐ **Preacher: Ancient History** (Garth Ennis & Steve Pugh + Carlos Ezquerra + Richard Case; cover by Glenn Fabry; tpbk) Collecting the self-contained stories and mini-series of some of the oddest members of **Preacher**'s supporting cast. 276pg *[25/02/98]* $24.95

☐ **Sandman Mystery Theatre 61** (Steven T. Seagle & Guy Davis) Part 1 of the 4-part *The City*. The lives of Wesley's supporting cast and 1939 New York City are explored. *[18/02/98]* $2.50

☐ **2020 Visions 12** (Jamie Delano & Steve Pugh) Will Adam prove himself? Will Zonia get her baby? Will the pregnant Claudine elude her pursuers and escape her dismal life in Las Vegas? *[18/02/98]* $2.25

ONE-SHOT ☐ **Vertigo Veritè: Hell Eternal** (Jaime Delano & Sean Phillips) Follow three young Brits on the run as neo-Nazi paramilitarists who flee to America and meet with a bloody and disturbing end. 64pg *[18/02/98]* $6.95

NEW ☐ **Witchcraft: La Terreur 1** (of 3; James Robinson & Michael Zulli + Vince Locke; cover by Michael Wm. Kaluta) As the French Revolution reaches a fever pitch, most have chosen either to join in the mass executions taking place in the Parisian streets, or to flee the city. Isadore Hibbert does neither. She arrives to free her aristocratic lover from jail. *[25/02/98]* $2.50

FANTAGRAPHICS

NEW ☐ **Luba 1** (Gilbert Hernandez) New stories on the **Love & Rockets** supporting character. Mature. b&w $2.95

ONE-SHOT ☐ **The Moon Looked Down and Laughed** (Mal Coney & Paul Holden) A return to Holy Cross. A tale of working class life in Ireland. Mature 88pg $9.95

☐ **Naughty Bits 25** (Roberta Gregory) Special love issue featuring Midge and Marcie. Mature readers. b&w ... $2.95

☐ **Poot 2** (Walt Holcombe) The relationship between Tom the insect and Snail the snail grows. Mature readers. b&w ... $2.95

ONE-SHOT ☐ **Zoot Suite** (Andrew & Roger Langridge) Bodkin and his friend go in search of his missing car and discover the wonders of Zeno's Paradox. 80pg b&w $9.95

GEMSTONE PUBLISHING

☐ **Piracy 2** (Wally Wood + Bill Elder) EC reprints. $2.50

☐ **Two-Fisted Tales 23** (John Severin + Jack Davis + Graham Ingels) EC reprints. $2.50

☐ **Vault of Horror 23** (Joe Orlando + Reed Crandall + Johnny Craig) EC reprints $2.50

GLADSTONE COMICS

☐ **Adventurous Uncle scrooge McDuck 3** (various) ... $1.95

☐ **Donald Duck 308** .. $1.95

☐ **Uncle Scrooge and Donald Duck 3** (various) $1.95

☐ **Uncle Scrooge Adventures in Color 39 & 40** (Barks) $8.95

☐ **Walt Disney's Comics 623** (various) 64pg $6.95

HARRIS COMICS

☐ **Vampirella 4: Holy War 1** (Grant Morrison + Mark Millar & Louis Small + Craig Stull) Introducing Mother Superior and her convent of leather-clad, vampire-hunting nuns! . $2.95

IMAGE COMICS

Homage Comics

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Image Comics

☐ **A Distant Soil 24** (Colleen Doran) D'Mer faces a threat from inside the Avatar's inner circle. b&w $2.95

☐ **The Awakening 3** (Stephen Blue) Rachel continues to drift into the minds of those most important to her. Mature readers. b&w 24pg $2.50

☐ **Badger 10** (Mike Baron & Mike Norton) Badger and Fuzzbuster get trapped in a celebrity look-a-like bar. b&w 24pg $2.95

ONE-SHOT ☐ **Channel Zero 1** (Brian Wood) A sideways look into the future. 24pg b&w $2.95

☐ **Espers 6** (Jim Hudnall & Greg Land) Another self-contained issue concentrating on a member of the team. 24pg b&w $2.95

NEW ☐ **Falling Man 1** (of 4; Bruce McCorkindale & Phil Hester) Floyd Pheninger's ordered world falls apart when he falls into a surreal void which has opened on the surface of the planet. b&w $2.95

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☐ **Immortal Two 8** (Mike Miller) Will Gaijin and Gabrielle be able to topple the world's most powerful organisation? . . $2.95

☐ **Jinx Volume 2 #5** (Brian Michael Bendis) Concluding Jinx's story with Goldfish. b&w 48pg $3.95

☐ **Kabuki 3** (David Mack) Kabuki confronts the surprise visitor at her home. Variant covers available. $2.95

☐ **Mage: The Hero Defined 8** (Matt Wagner) Kevin and Joe find themselves beset by a familiar form of hobgoblin – the Red Caps. $2.50

☐ **Ms Fortune 2** (Chris Marrinan) Ms Fortune confronts lesbian zombies, a treasure hunt and underworld thugs. . $2.95

☐ **Savage Dragon 46** (Erik Larsen) She-Dragon faces the might of the new ultra-powerful Vicious Circle. $2.50

☐ **Ship of Fools 3** (Bryan Glass & Michael Avon Oeming) The Jet Black Illuminati has made a big mistake by unleashing the Z virus. The population is turning into flesh-eating zombies. b&w 24pg $2.95

☐ **Soulwind 7** (Scott Morse) Geraldine and Weaver are separated in the darkness of the Mission De Augustus. b&w$2.95

☐ **The Tenth 6** (Tony Daniel + Beau Smith) Victor, Esperanza and Zorina are trapped hundreds of stories above the streets in a skyscraper of death. $2.50

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☐ **Curse of the Spawn 18** (Alan McElroy & Dwayne Turner) Tony Twist is targeted by an unknown and merciless adversary. $1.95

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☐ **Spawn 71** (Todd McFarlane & Greg Capullo) The relationship between blood and Spawn is examined. $1.95

Top Cow Productions

☐ **Ascension 5** (David Finch & Batt) Andromeda and Lucien have to prevent Voivodul from returning and destroying the world. *[25/02/98]* $2.50

☐ **The Darkness 13** (Garth Ennis + Mal Coney & Joe Benitez) Jackie teams up with Wenders. *[25/02/98]* . . . $2.50

☐ **The Darkness Collected Edition 4** (David Wohl + Christina Z & Marc Silvestri + Joe Benitez) Collecting **Witchblade** issues 7 & 8. 48pg *[18/02/98]* $2.50

☐ **Witchblade 21** (Christina Z + David Wohl & Michael Turner) Witchblade learns some shocking secrets about her powers and their origins. *[04/03/98]* $2.50

WildStorm Productions

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☐ **DV8 #16** (Mike Heisler & Tom Raney) Ivana Baiul is near death after the tumultuous battle of last issue. *[25/02/98]* . . $2.50

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☐ **Gen^{13} Bootleg 16** (Jan Strnad & Sean Shaw + Kevin Nowlan) Roxy is dead. But, is she really? Is it her astral form hovering near the body? *[18/02/98]* $2.50

NEW ☐ **Gen^{13} Bootleg Annual 1** (Warren Ellis & Steve Dillon) Follow-up to last year's annual. The kids go to Hell! 40pg *[25/02/98]* . . $2.95

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☐ **WildC.A.T.s 46** (Brandon Choi + Jon Peterson & Ed Benes) One of the Cat's will run out of lives. *[18/02/98]* . $2.50

NEW ☐ **WildC.A.T.s Annual 1** (James Robinson & Larry Stroman) Majestic is infected with an experimental virus and goes insane. 40pg *[25/02/98]* $2.50

KITCHEN SINK

☐ **The Crow: Walking Nightmares 3** (Chris Golden & Phil Hester + Ande Parks) *Re-solicited from January 1997.* b&w $2.95

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LONDON NIGHT

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MARVEL COMICS

Spider-Man family

☐ **Amazing Spider-Man 433** (Tom DeFalco & John Romita Jr + Bud LaRosa) Editor Joe Robertson quits the Bugle. *[11/02/98]* $1.99

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☐ **Spectacular Spider-Man 255** (J. M. DeMatteis & Luke Ross) Who is the mysterious Prodigy? *[25/02/98]* . . . $1.99

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Marvel Heroes

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X-Men family

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☐ **X-Force 76** (John Francis Moore & Adam Polina + Mark Morales) The spotlight falls on the ambiguous Shatterstar. *[25/02/98]* $1.99

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TOPPS COMICS

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VEROTIK

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WARP GRAPHICS

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INTERNATIONAL

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CHRISTMAS OPENING HOURS
We will be closed on the 25th, 26th, & 28th of December, & 1st January.

ADVANCE LISTINGS UK

With the majority of UK-produced comics, trade paperbacks and graphic novels not readily available, the following listing of material to be published next month gives readers the opportunity to order specific titles through newsagent's, bookshops or specialist outlets. As such, only titles nationally distributed through federated news outlets are included. All dates, prices and information are assumed to be accurate as provided by publishers. Late shipping, cancellations and changes in content will be detailed in future issues of ***Comics International****.*

Compiled by Kerry-Ann Hurley

Key to abbreviations used:

1 & 2 + 3	=	*Writer & penciller + inker*
wkly	=	*weekly frequency*
ftnly	=	*fortnightly frequency*
mthly	=	*monthly frequency*
qtrly	=	*quarterly frequency*
dgst	=	*small, approx A5 sized*
sqbd	=	*perfect bound; squared spine; without staples*
b&w	=	*black & white contents*
clr	=	*full colour contents*
pc	=	*part-colour contents*
gn	=	*graphic novel*
thbk	=	*trade hardback edition*
tpbk	=	*trade paperback, squarebound, comic size*
Xpgs	=	*number of interior pages*

TITLES ON SALE: JANUARY 1998

BOXTREE BOOKS

○ **Star Wars: X-Wing Rogue Squadron – The Phantom Affair** (tpbk; various) Exploring the farthest reaches of the galaxy through the eyes of the Rebel Alliance's elite front-line fighter pilots, X-Wing Rogue Squadron. 52pgs pc £1.40

ARF CARTOONS

○ **Smut: The Alternative Comic 88** (mthly; various) Adult humour comic strips featuring amongst others, a cartoon version of comedian Roy Chubby Brown. Mature. 40pgs pc £1.50

DC THOMSON

○ **Beano 2891-2894** (wkly; various) Humour strips including Dennis the Menace and Gnasher amongst other **Beano** regulars. 24pgs clr £0.45

○ **Beano Comic Library Monthly 379-380** (2 per mth; dgst; various) Extra-long comic strips of the favourite **Beano** characters. 68pgs pc £0.55

○ **Beano Superstars 72** (mthly; various) One complete comic strip per issue. 36pgs clr £1.10

○ **Bunty 2083-2086** (wkly; various) Picture and photo strips plus features. 32pgs pc £0.65

○ **Bunty Picture Library 458-459** (2 per mth; dgst; various) Reprint strips. 68pgs b&w £0.55

○ **Classics from the Comics 21** (mthly; various) Reprinting classic strips. 68pg b&w £1.20

○ **Commando Action and Adventure Stories 3108-3115** (8 per mth; dgst; various) War strips. 68pgs b&w £0.55

○ **Dandy 2924-2927** (wkly; various) Humour strips including Korky the Cat and other **Dandy** regulars. 24pgs clr £0.45

○ **Dandy Comic Library Monthly 355-356** (2 per mth; various) Extra long strips. 68pgs pc £0.55

○ **Football Picture Story Monthly 279-280** (2 per mth; various) Comic strip soccer. 68pgs b&w ... £0.55

○ **Fun Size Beano 7** (mthly; various) **Beano** spin-off book. 68pgs b&w £0.60

○ **Fun Size Dandy 7** (mthly; various) **Dandy** spin-off book. 68pgs b&w £0.60

○ **Mandy & Judy Picture Library 280-281** (2 per mth; dgst; various) One full-length strip per issue. 68pg b&w £0.55

EGMONT FLEETWAY

○ **Buster 78-79** (ftnly; various) Humour strips starring Buster, Chalky, et al. 32pgs clr ... £1.00

○ **Disney's Big Time 30 & 31** (ftnly; various) Articles, puzzles, photos, games and Disney strips. 52pgs clr £1.20

CANCELLED **Enid Blyton Mystery & Suspense**

○ **Judge Dredd Megazine Vol 3 #38** (mthly; various) Action anthology featuring mainstay, *Judge Dredd*, Preacher Cain the *Missionary Man* plus *Inaba*. 44pgs clr £2.00

○ **Sonic the Comic 120-121** (ftnly; various) Comic adventure strips of the Sega stars plus game reviews. 32pgs clr £1.25

CANCELLED ○ **Tom & Jerry Comic** (monthly)

○ **2000AD 1076-1079** (wkly; various) Anthology including the adventures of *Judge Dredd*, and *Nikolai Dante*; the return of Strontium Dog, *Durham Red*; plus the mysterious Men in Black, *Vector 13* 36pgs clr £1.20

H BAUER PUBLISHING

○ **Cosmic 7** (mthly; various)

KENT COMICS

42 WELL HALL ROAD, ELTHAM, LONDON, SE9 6SF.

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Due to the merger of Kent Comics and Archive Collections, a massive amount of back issues, cards and books must be cleared - Don't miss this one, Bargains for everyone !!!!!!!!!!!

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Monday December 29th 1997 to Saturday January 17th 1998 inc.

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Sunday February 1st to Saturday 21st February 1998 inc.

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Monday February 23rd to Saturday 28th February 1998 inc.

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Note :- In the interests of fairness, no back issues can be reserved during the sale period

Featuring Captain Cosmic — solver of space-type problems! Plus puzzles, competitions and features. 52pgs clr £1.25

THE RAG FACTORY

○ **Zit 92** (mthly; various) Adult humour comic strips. Mature readers. 48pgs pc £1.50

RAW COMICS

○ **Spit 61** (mthly; various) Adult humour comic strips. Mature readers. 52pgs pc £1.45

MARVEL (UK)

○ **Action Man 17** (4-wkly; various) Adventures featuring the toy soldier. 28pgs clr £1.40
○ **Astonishing Spider-Man 29** (4-wkly; various) Reprints Marvel US Spider-Man titles plus features. 72pgs clr £2.25
○ **Doctor Who Magazine 260** (4-wkly; various) Features plus a new comic strip. 52pgs clr £3.00
○ **Essential X-Men 30** (4-wkly; various) Anthology reprinting stories from US X-Men titles, plus features. 76pgs clr £2.25
○ **Marvel Heroes Reborn 5** (various) Reprinting the revamp of The Fantastic Four and The Avengers. 52pgs clr £1.99
○ **Rug Rats 26** (4-wkly; various) Comic strips and features. 24pgs clr £0.95
○ **Spectacular Spider-Man 30** (4-wkly; various) Reprint of an issue of a Marvel US Spider-Man title. 36pgs clr £1.40
○ **Wolverine Unleashed 18** (4-wkly; various) Reprints of Marvel US strips featuring the popular X-Man. 76pgs clr £2.25

NEXUS MEDIA

○ **Fun and Games 21 & 22** (ftnly; various) **Fun** reprints Fleetway comic strips. **Games** is a 24pg cover-mounted activities supplement. 24pg clr £0.99

THE REDAN COMPANY

○ **I Love to Read Batman 33** (mthly; various) Strips, games and posters. 32pgs clr £1.15

ROCK STEADY

○ **TAT Magazine 9** (mthly; various) Adult comic featuring humour strips, spoof features and news. Mature. 36pg clr ... £1.60

TITAN BOOKS

ONE-SHOT ○ **The Invisibles: Bloody Hell in America** (tpbk; Morrison & Jimenez + Stokes) Collecting the *Black Science* story from DC Vertigo's **The Invisibles Volume 2** #1-4. Introducing King Mob, Ragged Robin, Lord Fanny, Jack Frost and Boy: an unconventional group of occultist subversives. 104pgs clr £7.99

ONE-SHOT ○ **Preacher: Ancient History** (tpbk; Ennis & Dillon) Three tales of the deadly, the diabolical and the debauched provide essential background to the unfolding story of the Reverend Jesse Custer and his ongoing quest to find God. 224pgs clr £12.99

ONE-SHOT ○ **Spawn 6: Retribution** (tpbk; Mcfarlane) The sixth collection introduces the avenging shape of The Curse. A new voice holds sway over the homeless men and women that Spawn watches over – one that preaches divine retribution and possesses the raw power to back it up. 128pgs clr £7.99

ONE-SHOT ○ **Superman: Transformed** (tpbk; Mcfarlane) Superman struggles to understand how his dramatically altered super-powers work. Meanwhile, events are spiralling out of control threatening the safety of everyone in Metropolis. 208pgs clr £9.99

TITAN MAGAZINES

○ **Aliens Comic Magazine 3** (mthly; various) Reprint comic strips with features, interviews and competitions. 52pgs clr ... £2.00
○ **Babylon 5 Magazine 7** (mthly; various) Features: interviews with Walter Koenig (Bester), Patricia Tallman (Lyta) and Andrea Thompson (Talia Winters); info on the TV show; comic strips and news. 68pgs clr £3.25
○ **Manga Mania 44** (bi-mthly; various) The latest anime and manga news, plus reprint manga strips. 98pgs clr £2.95
○ **Sabrina Comic 3 & 4** (ftnly; various) Comic strip adventures of Sabrina the Teenage Witch plus features, photos and fashion tips. 24pgs clr £0.99
○ **Simpsons Comic Magazine 11** (mthly; various) Reprinting Bongo comic strips, plus puzzles, games, etc. 52pgs clr £2.00
○ **Spawn Comic Magazine 5** (mthly; various) Reprint strips with features. 52pgs clr £2.00
○ **Star Trek Monthly 36** (various) Focusing on who is related to who in the Star Trek Universe, plus features and news. 68pgs clr £3.25
○ **Star Wars: The Official Magazine 12** (bi-mthly; various) Includes the second part of a two part interview with the director of *Empire Strikes Back*, Irvin Kirshner plus an interview with Michael Carter (Bib Fortuna) and special effects supervisor John Stears. 68pgs clr £3.25
○ **X-Files Monthly 31** (mthly; various) Containing features, interviews, comic strips and exclusive previews of the season five episodes. 52pgs clr ... £2.00

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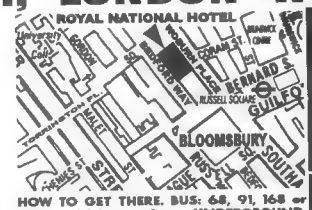

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NEWS EUROPE

Changes at Egmont Fleetway and The Judge Dredd Megazine

EGMONT Fleetway, the publisher of 2000AD, has announced the appointment of Julie Goldsmith as Managing Director.

Goldsmith, who joined the company in 1991, counts the recent relaunch of the **Barbie** magazine among her successes. She replaces Frank Knau, who takes up a new position in Germany.

Not content to rest on its laurels, Egmont Fleetway has announced that its **Judge Dredd Magazine** is to broaden its range to include selected material syndicated from US publishers, beginning with issue #39, on sale in February.

The first such strip will be from DC Vertigo: the acclaimed and controversial **Preacher** – whose creators Garth Ennis and Steve Dillon previously worked on the Judge Dredd strip in 2000AD.

The **Megazine** will expand by eight pages to allow for a longer lead strip, and the cover price will rise from £2.00 to £2.50.

2000AD will also be undergoing changes in 1998. It will switch to a 32-page self-cover format when the paper stock is upgraded from a weight of 55 to 80gsm.

In losing its separate covers, 2000AD sacrifices one page of comic strip and three editorial pages.

Cartoons conquer best-sellers chart

WHILE comic sales in America continue to plummet, here in the UK cartoon-based books have notched an impressive four spots out of 10 in **The Sunday Times**' general paperback best-selling book chart, for the week ending 14 December. Coming in at numbers five, six, seven, and eight respectively are Bill Watterson's latest **Calvin & Hobbes** collection (**It's a Magical World**); **The Dilbert Principle** – Scott Adams' humorous take on office life, Matt Groening's **The Simpsons: The Complete Guide** and **The Giles Anniversary Album 1998**, celebrating

the work of the late cartoonist.

In the hardback charts, the latest Viz collection – **The Full Toss** – sits at the number seven position, based on more than 9,500 copy sales in the previous week – more copies than most books sell in their entire lifetime.

On sale this month from Bloomsbury Publishing are two book editions of work by off-the-wall cartoonist Steven Appleby (right).

Antmen Carry Away My Thoughts As Soon As I Think Them, priced £12.99, is a new hardback collection, while the £6.99 **The Collected Secret Thoughts of Steven Appleby** is a paperback reprinting existing work, alongside new material.

Hailed by **Time Out** as "probably the best comic illustrator in Britain", Appleby's work appears each week in Saturday's **The Guardian**.

IN BRIEF

National Comic Awards

THE 1998 National Comic Awards ceremony will take place on Saturday, March 21, at UKCAC 98, which will be held in Manchester for the first time.

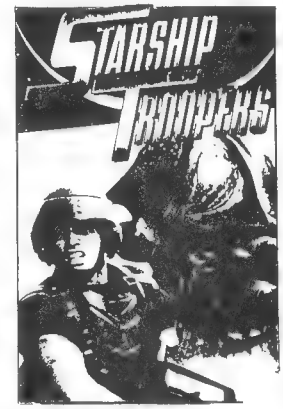
Unlike the 1997 ceremony, the awards organisers promise this will be a more fan-friendly affair at £5.00 a head, with a special charity fund-raiser vote for The Best Comic in The World... Ever! Voting ballots appear elsewhere in this issue.

Gaiman's Mr Punch adapted for theatre

THE EDINBURGH University Theatre Company will be staging a theatrical production of Neil Gaiman and Dave McKean's **Mr Punch** graphic novel in February.

The producers plan to translate the atmospheric intensity of the book to the stage using ambitious technical effects, extensive photographic montage projections and grotesque puppetry. For more information contact Sophie Brendel, Bedlam Theatre, 11b Bristol Place, Edinburgh. (Tel: 0966 274 398)

Titan Books adds Starship Troopers



TITAN BOOKS, the UK's most prolific publisher of graphic novels and trade paperbacks, is adding the comics adaptation of the soon-to-be-released SF blockbuster movie *Starship Troopers* to its list of titles.

On sale January 2, the £9.99 paperback is adapted by Warren (**DV8**) Ellis and Gordon (**Judge Dredd**) Rennie with art by **Lobo**'s Paolo Parente.

60 years of Superman celebration

IN THE spring, American Dream Gallery of Bath will be exhibiting original Superman comic art in celebration of the DC character's 60th anniversary. Also on show will be specially commissioned "Superman at 60" drawings from artists such as Steve (**Nexus**) Rude and Mark (**Batman: Shadow of the Bat**) Buckingham. The exhibition will run from February 14 to May 23.

Currently on show – until Feb 10 – at the Walcot Street gallery is the Independent Visions exhibition featuring artwork by Buckingham and Rude plus Bob (**Minimum Wage**) Fingerman, Terry (**Strangers In Paradise**) Moore, Bryan (**Luther Arkwright**) Talbot and Charlie (**The X-Files**) Adlard.

Peterborough's eighth fantasy fair

THE EIGHTH Peterborough Fantasy Fair will be held on Sunday, May 10, at the Cresset Exhibition Centre, Bretton, Peterborough.

A wide variety of fantasy-related products will be available, including trading cards, comics, models, figures, and film and TV star collectibles. There will also be guest appearances by personalities from the worlds of fantasy and SF, and a demonstration of role-playing games and war games.

For further information, contact Bruce King on 01480 216372.

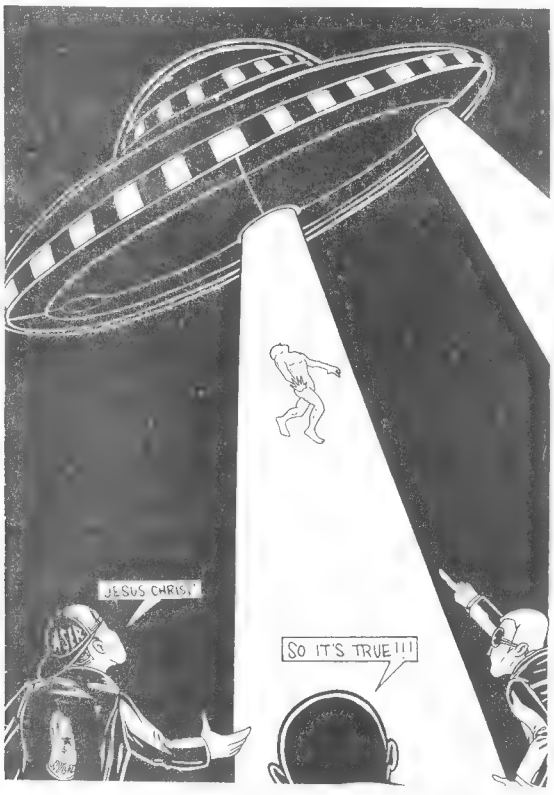
Mainstay of British comics dies

VETERAN British comics writer, editor and artist Leonard Matthews has died, aged 83.

Inspired by the comics and boys' papers of his childhood, Matthews joined the Amalgamated Press in 1939 as a sub-editor on their new **Knockout**.

After World War II, Matthews was promoted to editor of **Knockout**, and rose to managing editor of AP's comics line, which then included **Sun, Comet, Thriller Picture Library** and **Film Fun** among its titles. In 1960, Matthews joined the board of Fleetway Publications as director of its juvenile line, and under his leadership a range of new titles were launched, including **Buster** and **Valiant**, with weekly sales figures exceeding 500,000.

Matthews left several years later to establish his own company, Marts Press, specialising in pre-school titles.



AMSTERDAM'S Pushed 2 Far Comix kick starts 1998 with The Big Lie. Based on the Milton William Cooper papers published by Cosmic Awareness, it aims to bring a fresh perspective to the aliens/government conspiracy genre, while answering such nagging questions as who killed JFK and what is really hidden in Area 51. The two part black and white 32-page A4 comic, written by Lazar, with art by Michael Andeloe, can be ordered from "Het Raadsel", Nieuwe Hemweg 7e/f, 1013 B.G. Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

UK anthropomorphic manga

The Wild Side is a proposed manga-style comic, from United Publications and Limelight Publishing

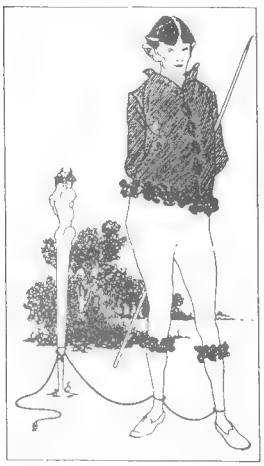
THE CROYDON-based United Publications' first comics venture – the manga and anthropomorphic comic, **Wild Side** – will be released in February.

Co-published with Limelight Publishing, who are based in Honolulu, the 40-page black and white standard comic book-sized title has been in the planning stages for a year. Editor Martin Dudman promises the best stories and artwork "produced by fans, for fans".

An anthology with four strips per issue, it covers a range of styles from the traditional Japanese manga through to contemporary American styles.

The first issue features: *The King of Hans Bride* written by Paul Kidd and drawn by TAB (shown right); *Zen Zebras: Stars & Stripes*, by Talis Kimberley and Fox with inks by David Morris; *Lark & Key: Partners Part 1* written by Mark Barnard with art from Terrie Smith and *Third Eye Part 1* written by Paul Kidd with pencils by Freddy Anderson and inks by Rommel Ignacio.

IN THIS FORM, MY BREASTS ARE THE NORTHERN MOUNTAINS!
MY HAIR IS THE YANG-TZE!
MY EYES SHINE WITH THE LIGHT OF A NATION'S TRUST.
MY ROBES COVER AND COMFORT THE PEOPLE OF MY LANDS



"Yes, dear Aubrey is almost too [illegible]. He cannot forget that he has been to Dieppe – once."

Oscar Wilde

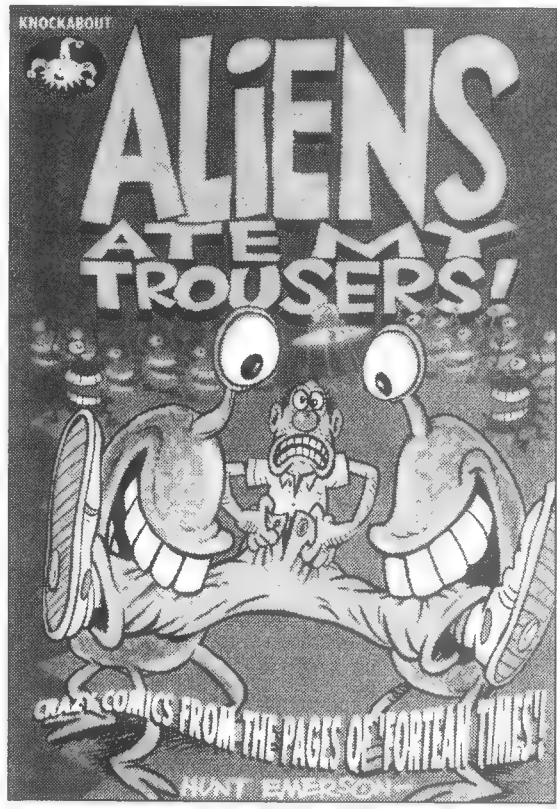
Brighton's Aubrey Beardsley Exhibition

SHOCK: the sixth Cartoon County show, is held in Brighton in June, and pays tribute to the work of the Brighton-born Victorian illustrator Aubrey Beardsley.

Beardsley first came to prominence with his illustrations for Sir Thomas Malory's **Morte d'Arthur** (1893), and Oscar Wilde's **Salome**, a year later.

His fine line high contrast ink drawings shocked Victorian society with their erotic and fantastic content, and their disregard of conventional form and perspective.

Details of the Shock exhibition, which will be accompanied by seminars and workshops, can be obtained from David Edgar Booth on 01403 786770 (tel/fax).



*A COLLECTION from cartoonist Hunt Emerson's Phenomenomix strip in **Fortean Times** is set to ship in March. Entitled **Aliens ate my Trousers**, the £7.99 80-page Knockabout book will contain Emerson's parodies of paranormal phenomena, including toads in stones, rains of fish, trouser-eating aliens, and the nan bread with Elvis's face.*

Competition winners update

A COPY of Aurum Press's **The Slings and Arrows Comic Guide** was won by the following in **Comics International** #85's competition. Each answered correctly A B B.

Sharon Amos, Cockermouth
Mark Crowther, Dublin, Ireland
Jerry Glass, Partick, Glasgow
Phil Greaves, Otley, W.Yorkshire
David J Green, Worcester
Tony Horton, Dewsbury, W.Yorks
Peter Ismay, Clacton-on-Sea
Graham Jones, Edinburgh
Giuseppe Lombardo, Italy
Nick Moon, York
Gareth Negus, Rochdale, Lancs
C. Patel, Erith, Kent
Claire Utton, Camberley, Surrey
Mark Viner, Sydenham, London
Steve Williams, Chorltonville, Manchester

THE five winners of **Comics International** #86's Titan **Spawn** book sets competition, who each answered correctly A C B are:

Nicholas Bryan, Chelmsford
Barney Burnett, Micklefield
Stewart Croft-Perkins, Scole
Fergal McSwiggan, Omagh
Kathryn Rushe, Manchester

Your chance to win a 2000AD customised Sony Playstation!

Over £700 worth of customised 2000AD prizes to be won!

***2000AD** publisher Egmont Fleetway has come up with fantastic prizes for TWENTY-FIVE lucky **Comics International** readers!*

All you have to do is complete the questions opposite, mail in the form and you could win one of the following great prizes!

GRAND PRIZE!

A CUSTOMISED SONY PLAYSTATION!
Not only is this a state of the art first prize, but it's unique! You could win the world's only 2000AD personalised Sony Playstation

FIRST PRIZE!

CUSTOMISED DOC MARTENS
Twelve pairs of the original air-cushioned boots, each hand finished by top **2000AD** artist Jason Brashill!

SECOND PRIZE!

FACE OFF WITH DREDD OVER A CUP OF COFFEE!
Twelve **2000AD** mugs for runners-up, so you can drink away your sorrows for not winning the Playstation!

2000AD is Britain's longest-running weekly adventure comic. Launched in 1977, this award-winning SF and fantasy anthology has kick-started the careers of a wealth of top British talent including artists Simon Bisley, Brian Bolland, Glenn Fabry and Dave Gibbons.

Writers Pat Mills, Alan Grant and John Wagner rose to prominence through their work on **2000AD** and its Lawman of the Future, Judge Dredd has become a household name.

Breaking traditional barriers, it has gathered a loyal following from superstar rock singers to leading politicians, as well as attracting new readers every week young and old with its high profile newsstand presence flying the flag for British comics.

CUT OUT COUPON ALONG DOTTED LINE

Please answer all the following questions:

How often do you read 2000AD?
a) Weekly
b) Occasionally
c) Never

Which 2000AD character you would like to see revived most of all?
a) Sam Slade, Robohunter
b) Rogue Trooper
c) Nemesis the Warlock
d) ABC Warriors
e) Bad Company
f) Strontium Dog
g) Dan Dare
h) Bix Barton
i) Outlaw
j) Zenith

*Other (please specify):*_____

Would you like to see some of the comic strips revert to black and white artwork?
a) Yes *b) No* *c) Pass*

Do other people read your copy of 2000AD?
a) No
b) 1 other
c) 2 others
*d) More (please specify):*_____

Would you like to see...

a) More serials	*YES*	*NO*
b) More complete stories	*YES*	*NO*
c) More new characters	*YES*	*NO*
d) Revivals of old characters	*YES*	*NO*

What age group do you fit in?
a) 10-15
b) 16-20
c) 21-30
d) 31-40
e) Over 40

Please state your shoe size:_____

Name:_____
(Please print)

Address:_____
(Street & number)

_____
(Town or city)

_____
(County & post code)

Send this completed form to:
2000AD COMPETITION
COMICS INTERNATIONAL,
8 TRINITY ROAD, LONDON N2 8JJ, ENGLAND
All entries must be postmarked before January 31st, 1998

INTERNATIONAL RETAIL INDEX

AUSTRALIA

• **Arcadia Unbound**, 267 Forest Rd., Hurstville, New South Wales 2220. Mon-Wed & Fri 10.30-7, Thurs 10.30-8, Sat 10-4, Sun 12-3 (US imp & back, manga, gn, merch, CCG, SF-horror-fantasy bks & mags, kits & supplies) 0061 2 9585 1489

• **Books & Bounties/Comics Haven**, 157A Charters Towers Road, Hermit Park, Townsville, Queensland 4812. Mon-Fri 9-6, Sat 9-4 (US imp & back, manga, gn, merch, RPG, CCG) e-mail: Comicshaven@Bigpond.com.au 0061 7 4779 2408

• **Kinda Lotsa Comics and Stuff**, Shop 4, 503-511 King St, Newtown, Sydney, New South Wales. Mon-Sat 10.30-7.30 (US back, toys, merch, non-sport cards) 0061 2 9565 1054

• **Known Space Books**, 1st Floor, 108 Gawler Place, Adelaide, SA 5000. Wed-Sat 12-6 (US & UK back, **2000AD** specialist, SF bks) 0061 8 8223 4304

• **Phantom Zone**, 207 George St., Liverpool 2170, New South Wales. Mon-Fri 9-6, Sat-Sun 9-4. (imp, back, bks, merch, manga, RPG, action figures, models) 0061 2 9601 2622

• **The Vault**, PO Box A1099, Sydney South 1235. (US back issues, trading cards) e-mail: the vault@hotmail.com. 0061 2 9541 2948

AUSTRIA

• **Comic Treff**, Getreidemarkt 2-4, 1010 Vienna. Mon-Fri 10-7, Sat 10-1 (US imp & back, manga, gn, CCG, frgn-German, trading cards) 0043 11 586 76 27

FRANCE

• **Dangereuses Visions**, 83 rue de la Monnaie, 59800 Lille. Mon-Sat 10-12.30 & 2-7.30. (US imp; manga; gn; RPG & CCG; trading cards; merch) 0033 3200 60607

• **L'Antre des Dragons**, 56 rue de Loup, 33000 Bordeaux. Mon-Sat 10-1 & 2-7. (US imp, manga, gn, RPG, CCG, trading cards, merch, video) e-mail: dragons@atlantel.fr 0033 55 65 17378

GERMANY

• **Black Dog Comics**, Luxemburger Strasse 6, D-13353 Berlin. Mon-Fri 11-6.30, Sat 11-2. (US imp & back, gn, trading cards) 0049 30 453 1204

• **Grober Unfug**, Tossener Strasse 32-33, 10961 Berlin. Mon-Sat 11-7. (US imp & back, manga, gn, CCG, merch, trading cards) 0049 30 6940 1490

GREECE

• **Metropolis Comics**, 94 Metropoleos St, 54622 Thessaloniki. Mon-Sat 10.30-3.30 & 7.30-11.30. (US imp & back, manga, gn, RPG, CCG, trading cards, merch, frgn) e-mail: metrocom@classic.diavlos.gr 0030 3 193 7775

• **Solaris**, 6 Botasi Str., 10682, Athens. Mon/Wed/Sat 9-3.30, Tue/Thu/Fri 9-2.30 & 5-8.30. (US imp & back, manga, gn, trading cards, merch) 0030 1 384 1065

HUNGARY

• **Troll Kepregenyta'r**, Terez Krt 13, Budapest 1067. Mon-Fri 10-6, Sat 10-1. (US imp, manga, gn, RPG, CCG, trading cards, merch) 0036 1 322 6026

ITALY

• **Avalon**, via Battisti 9/b, Bologna. Mon 3-7, Tue-Sat 10.30-1 & 2-7.30. (US imp & back, manga, gn, RPG, CCG, trading cards, merch) 0039 51 234459

• **Avalon**, via Pedriali 21, Forli. Mon 3-7, Tue-Sat 10-1 & 2-7. (US imp & back, manga, gn, RPG, CCG, trading cards, merch) 0039 543 33523

• **Avalon**, via Settembrini 20, Milan. Mon 3.30-7.30, Tue-Sat 11-7.30. (US imp & back, manga, gn, RPG, CCG, trading cards, merch) 0039 2 29400410

• **Avalon**, via Foscolo 3, Padova. Mon 3-7, Tue-Sat 10-1 & 2-7. (US imp & back, manga, gn, RPG, CCG, trading cards, merch) 0039 49 658290

• **Avalon**, via Bissolati 68, Rome. Mon 3-7, Tue-Sat 10-1 & 2-7. (US imp & back, manga, gn, RPG, CCG, trading cards, merch)

• **Avalon**, via Magenta 0, Torino. Mon 3.30-7, Tue-Sat 10.30-1 & 2-7.30. (US imp & back, manga, gn, RPG, CCG, merch, trading cards) 0039 11 5617252

SOUTH AFRICA

• **Euroniag**, Shop 79A, East Rand Mall, Boksburg, Johannesburg. Mon-Sun 9-10. (US imp & back, manga, gn, CCG, trading cards, merch) 0027 11 896 3773

SPAIN

• **Gigamesh**, RDA San Pedro 53, 08010 Barcelona. Mon-Sat 10-1.30 & 4.30-8 (US imp, gn, manga, RPG, CCG, merch) 0034 3 246 6359

SWEDEN

• **Comics Heaven**, Stora Nygatan 23, 11127 Stockholm. Mon-Fri 10-6.30, Sat 11-6, Sun 12-4. (US imp, US back, gn, merch) 0046 8 202516

Retailers

Reach the world through the pages of CI's International Retail Index for only £6 a month! Bookable in 6-issue blocks, send £36 plus your shop details to:

Comics International, 8 Trinity Road, London N2 8JJ, England

World News: AUSTRALIA

Dee Vee doubles frequency

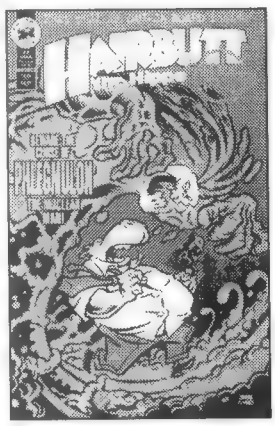
WITH its February shipping fifth issue, Marcus Moore's popular 32 page anthology comic increases to bi-monthly.

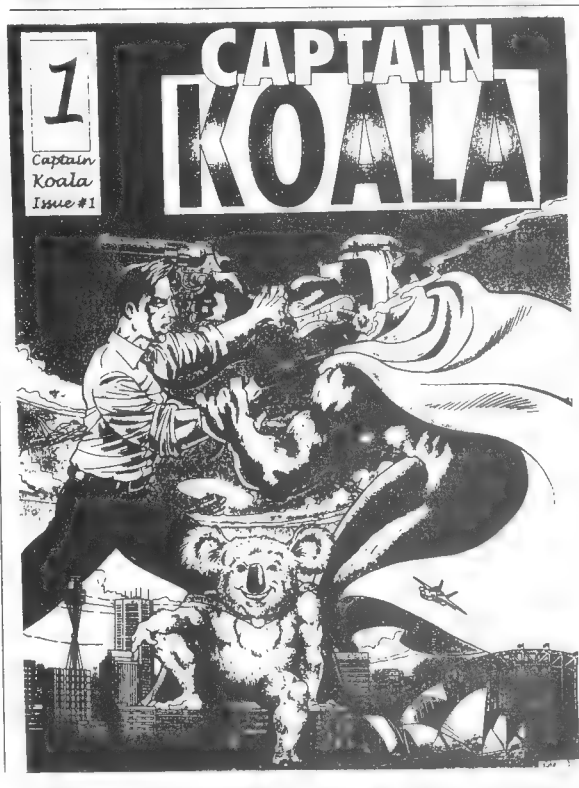
Priced $2.95 (US), it includes a new episode of *Alec* by Eddie (**From Hell**) Campbell plus a pull-out special by Ralph (**Captain Dolphin**) Kidson.

Hairbutt the Hippo: Private Eye

DUE TO the success of its *Crime Files* set, Rat Race Comix has announced the return of the Ozcon Award-winning Bodine Americah and Jason Paulos's **Hairbutt the Hippo**. The $2.95 6-issue title debuts in February.

THEATRE
WHAT USUALLY HAPPENS IS A PERIOD OF UNCOMFORTABLE DISQUIET AS I AWAIT THE COSMIC SHRIEK TO TRANSPORT ME TO MY NEXT JUNCTION WITH EVIL!
WELL THERE'S STILL PLENTY OF EVIL AROUND HERE! IT MAY NOT BE THE MONSTERS MADE FROM LIVING SNOT VARIETY...
...BUT THERE'S STILL MORE THAN ENOUGH TO GO AROUND!





Aussie's cuddly superhero

FIRST IT was the UK's Captain Bulldog, then Australia tried its own mix of anthropomorphic humour and high adventure in **Captain Koala**.

A US-format title from Queensland-based writer James Clifton, the 24 page $2.50(US) title is now on sale, beautifully drawn by Daniel Esperado in a style blending classic European and modern US comic art.

The monthly **Captain Koala** is available internationally through Diamond or direct from Koala Comics at Box 203, Salisbury, Queensland 4107.

Greener Pastures expansion

I THINK IT'S GONE A BIT OFF IT'S YELLOW. WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO DO WITH IT?
JUST DRINK IT FOR GODSAKE!!
IT'S NOT GOING TO KILL YOU. YOU'RE NOT GOING TO DIE!!

ONE OF Australia's leading independent titles, **Greener Pastures**, is set to blitz the direct market with a range of product.

The regular monthly $2.95 Kronos Komicstitle, with #8 currently in stores, will be replaced next month by the **Greener Pastures Extravaganza** #1.

Priced $3.50, it features regular lead Trevor Bovis the prize-winning bull as the building-stomping Trevorzilla in a 32 page special which also introduces Boobeyes Guy.

Also set to ship in February is a $5 **Greener Pastures** poster and the $8 starter pack containing issues #1-4 and #4½.

World News: ARGENTINA

Comics Festival Report:
FANTABAIRES 2
Alan Grant in Buenos Aires

ABOVE: Leonardo Manco's KHZ 203.3 from Argentina's Hacha.

AFTER the success of Fantabaires 96, I was invited back to Buenos Aires' second convention, held on one whole level of a beautiful dry centre shopping mall.

Comics aren't just sold in specialist shops but also in newsagents' kiosks throughout the city. Media interest was high, and 12,000-plus fans turned up for the four-day con, some having travelled over a thousand miles to get there. On the Saturday and Sunday, signings went on from noon till midnight.

I was in good company: fellow guests included artists Jose Munoz, Eduardo Barretto, Ariel Olivetti, Alcatena, Altuna, Lalia... and Adam West.

I was introduced to the great man backstage, before his (very entertaining) presentation.

"I was a teenager during the '60s," I ingratiated myself, "and the Batman TV show was a real cult with me and my friends. We wouldn't go out on a Saturday night until it was over." Adam held my hand warmly in his.

"I am very happy to be in your country, senor," he replied.

Batman is by far the most popular comics character in Argentina. Having lived through traumatic and cruel times under military government, the people seem to be very hot on deeply moral characters.

Having said that, Lobo is also popular; in fact, the country's best-selling home-produced comic, **Cazador**, seems pretty solidly based on the Main Man – to the extent that the artists scan in Bisley pics, then paint over them.

The first Fantabaires Awards went to Esterhuis and Solano Lopez for their late '50s story *El Eternauta*, the epic tale of Argentina invaded by aliens, and one of the best comic stories I've ever read.

Tragically, the writer Esterhuis and his daughters were among the country's "disappeared".

American superheroes have almost killed off the home-grown industry – as they have in several other countries I've visited. The number of artists, both amateurs and pros of many years standing, who asked me to review their portfolios in the hope of me finding them work was quite depressing.

However, there's a new wave of comic fanzines and mags like **Hacha**, **MegaUltrafanzine**, **Comiequando** and **Asesinos** which show the home talent doesn't intend to lie down and roll over.

Joker creator Jerry Robinson was in town on other business, but spent a couple of days hanging out at the con, and Oscar Zarate also made an unscheduled appearance.

It was the start of spring there, with temperatures around 80, and it felt great to be able to walk the still-thronged streets at 3.00am in safety, surrounded by fire-eaters, men on stilts and tango singers.

When I got home, I mentioned my meeting with Adam West to my daughter. "You met him about 10 years ago," she reminded me, "At Nick Landau's Forbidden Planet party." I had completely forgotten.

I guess Adam had, too.

INTERNATIONAL FESTIVALS

The following listing is of the world's major comics festivals and conventions. For further information, call the organisers on the phone, fax or e-mail numbers provided. Or to view updates, contact them on the websites where detailed.

Organisers' estimates of the attendance at their previous event is detailed in brackets.

January 22-25: FRANCE

ANGOULEME BD (1997 est: 167,300). Organisers: Festival International de la Bande Dessinee, 2 Place d l'Hotel de Ville, 16000 Angloulem, France. Tel: 0033 5 54 45 97 86 50. Fax: 0033 5 45 95 99 28. Website: http://bdangouleme.com

February 21-22: ITALY

FUMETTO E IMMAGINAZIONE, Bologna (1997 est: not available). Organisers: ARCI, Bologna. Tel: 0039 51 521939.

March 21-22: ENGLAND

MEMORABILIA '98, Birmingham. (1997 est: 12,000) Organisers: Made in Heaven, 19 Broughton Rd, Biggar, Scotland ML12 6AN. Tel/fax: 01899 221 622. Website: http://www.memorabilia.co.uk

UKCAC 98, Manchester. (1997 est: not available) Organisers: Rusty Staples, PO Box 146, Glasgow G1 5RN. Website: http://www.ukcac.digitalalba.com

April: ITALY

LUCCA COMICS (1997 est: 40,000). Organisers: Lucca Comics, Via della Cavallerizza 11, 55100 Lucca, Italy. Tel: 0039 583 48522. Fax: 0039 583 91203. e-mail: comic&games@ lunet.it. Website: http://www.comune.lucca.it/COMICS. Date TBA.

May: SPAIN

BARCELONA SALO DEL COMIC. Details to be announced

May 15-17: FINLAND

ARCTIC COMICS FESTIVAL. (1997 est: 5,000-7,000) Organisers: Arctic Comics Festival, Rautatienkatu 13B, Fin-90100 Oulu, Finland. Tel: 00358 8 3121 540. Fax: 00358 8 3121541. e-mail: graafinen.studio@koskela.netppl.fi

July 17-19: UNITED STATES

WIZARD WORLD CHICAGO CON. (1997 est: not available) Organisers: Wizard Press, 151 Wells Ave., Congers, NY 10920-2064. Tel: 001 608 226 0200. Website: http://www. wizard press.com

August 13-16: UNITED STATES

COMIC-CON INTERNATIONAL '98, San Diego, CA (1997 est: 35,000). Organisers: Comic-Con International, PO Box 128458, San Diego, CA 92112-8458. Tel: 001 619 491 2475. Fax: 001 619 544 0743.

August 29-30: SCOTLAND

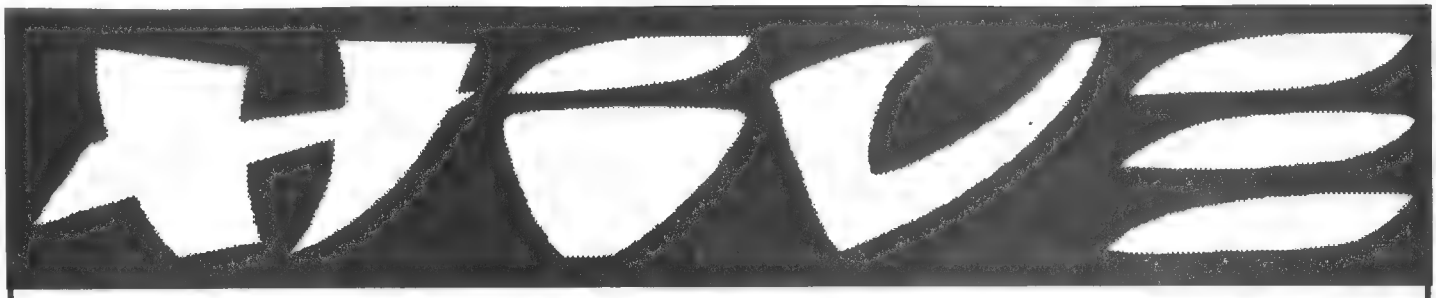
MEMORABILIA '98, Glasgow. (first) Organisers: Made in Heaven, 19 Broughton Rd, Biggar, Scotland ML12 6AN. Tel/fax: 01899 221 622. Website: http://www.memorabilia.co.uk

November 7-8: ENGLAND

MEMORABILIA '98, Birmingham. (1997 est: 12,000) Organisers: Made in Heaven, 19 Broughton Rd, Biggar, Scotland ML12 6AN. Tel/fax: 01899 221 622. Website: http://www.memorabilia.co.uk

November: ITALY

LUCCA COMICS (1997 est: 40,000). Organisers: Lucca Comics, Via della Cavallerizza 11, 55100 Lucca, Italy. Tel: 0039 583 48522. Fax: 0039 583 91203. e-mail: comic&games @lunet.it. Website: http://www.comune.lucca.it/COMICS. Dates To Be Announced



BRIGHTON: 6 Kensington Gdns, Brighton BN1 4AL Phone/fax: (01273) 687802
EASTBOURNE: Enterprise Shopping Centre, in 'Gamehouse', next to station

Frank Butcher tells Ricky to turn it in...

PAT, TELL RICKY THAT BIANCA IS MISSIN' AHT ON GOIN' AHT CLUBBIN' COS THAT PRANNY' RICKY IS SPENDIN' TOO MAAACH DOSH ON COMICS. THE UVVER DAY BIANCA CAUGHT RICKY WIV A TORCH UNDER THE COVERS WIV A COMIC. SHE TOLD PHIL, BUT HE THOUGHT SHE SAID, "TORCH THE CAR LOT," AN' HE DID! NOW I'VE GOTTA DO A RUNNER FROM THE SQUARE, UVVERWISE I'LL END UP DOIN' BLAG FOR SOMETHING I NEVER DID! MOODY, INNIIT, STRAKE A LIGHT, GORBLIMEY, GUV'NOR, ETC... IF HE'D BOUGHT EM AT RESERVOIR FROGS AT THE HIVE (POSSIBLY THE CHEAPEST IMPORT COMIC RETAILER IN ENGLAND), RICKY WOULDN'T HAVE TA KEEP IT FROM BIANCA ALL THE TIME, SO THE ENTIRE SITUATION WOULD NEVVA AVE APPENED

"Advertising is useless & ineffective,"

SAID JIM DAWSON OF *PIG FARMERS MONTHLY*. "I ADVERTISED IN *COMICS INTERNATIONAL* FOR 2 YEARS, AND NEVER SOLD A SINGLE PIG." ON A LIGHTER NOTE, THOUGH, RESERVOIR FROGS PLACED A SERIES OF ADS IN BOTH *COMICS INTERNATIONAL* AND *PIG FARMERS MONTHLY*, AND CREATED MORE THAN 80 STANDING ORDERS, OVER 300 WANTS LISTS FAXED AND SENT IN, NEARLY 200 OTHER ASSORTED ENQUIRIES. WE ALSO SOLD FOUR DOZEN HEAD OF PIGS, FOUR BOARS, THREE PIG STYES AND A MARVIN GAYE TAPE WE BOUGHT AT A BOOT SALE. TALK ABOUT QUICK TURNAROUND!

HIVE BIOGRAPHIES

Those who strive at Hive (with chives) to arrive with your comics...

Gary: Known as Starsky Proto on certain days, his hobby is digging moats around city cathedrals, filling it with wire wool and cheese mixture, baking at gas mark 5 for 20 minutes, and sharing the proceeds made with Russell Grant at panto in Wimbledon.

Paul gargles coleslaw atop his mile-high semi-detached donkey, whilst whistling the tune of Crossroads backward in Greek. On Saturdays, he can often be seen in your town collecting concrete manholes. Currently he has over 2,800.

Tony has had a real interest in bloater paste since the age of 3. Single since the age of 50, he now dedicates his time to drinking treacle, has a dog called Giro, and is a fully-fledged crusty. A Tory MP for 15 years, he wants capital punishment back.

Eliot bunged the gypsy a fiver so Jed tarmaced his living room. Seen often smoking his own smell, his other habits include *Star Wars*, growing dogs in spinach, combing his eyes, and convincing people he is *not* Val Doonican.

Esther does mail order and is happy to deal with your enquiries. If not there, ask for Starsky. If he's not there, contact Paul, Tony or Eliot. If nobody is there, we are shut. Stop ringing us late at night, we all live in one big house, and are all in bed by 7 every night.

RETAIL - MAIL ORDER - COMING TO YOUR TOWN SOON

MEDIAFILE

CI associate editor Sarah Bolesworth looks at coverage of comics in the media

DUNDEE's best, **Beano** and **Dandy** publisher DC Thomson, may have to abandon its by now nearly naked formula of announcing "radical" changes to its characters or titles in order to attract higher short-term sales.

Numerous examples of arcane Scottish publicity strategy have bypassed unwitting feature-writers in the past, and this month's Desperate Dan farrago added one more to the list.

The Sun was clearly in on DC Thomson's Desperate Dan story (he "did a Frank" – retired and came back). But Alex Bellos at **The Guardian** either did not know or had a moment of childish denial about the comics publisher's scam.

Bellos's piece [14.11.1997] lightly parodied Dan's departure but then diverged into the historical implications of characters being "pensioned off". But to his credit, he did avoid calling Dan an icon.

Dave Donaldson, managing editor of DC Thomson's children's publications, told Bellos: *Desperate Dan was designed when cowboys were in lots of black and white films. He is one of those characters who would not be featured if the comic was launched today. On his 60th birthday, the editor thought maybe it was time to retire him.*

Bellos took up the baton and enthusiastically ran off to list "signs of the times" characters, those discarded because DC Thomson thought their culture was out of date with contemporary mores.

All fine at Dandy

BUT what at DC Thomson is *in* date, as it were? In reality, rather than the soapy, family sort of place the publishers would have us imagine, its office is a newspaper production base, and not at all like its comics.

DC Thomson's comics are anachronistic, they do not fit any model. This has not happened purely by chance.

On one hand, DC Thomson knows better than any English publisher, it seems, that kids are often much smarter than people who do kids' marketing: they know what comics are about.

On the other, **Beano** and **Dandy** editorial executives value their titles' must-buy factor, as in "must buy a comic for my son/daughter, ah yes, there's a **Beano/Dandy**, I used to read that when I was eight and it still looks all right".

In other words, they know they are often selling to adult buyers. This Dan story was heavy on nostalgia — and it *was* all a bit desperate.

Meanwhile, at the other end of Fleet Street – in fact at the other end of Shadwell on Thames, aka Wapping, **The Sun**'s features pages had a "campaign" going to bring back Desperate Dan – *and* his cow-pie, even in these BSE-ridden times (*Mediafile*, CI 88).

Dandy editor Maurice Heggie, like his harness-partner Ewan Kerr, who edits **The Beano**, is a bit of a humorist.

Mischievous totter

BUT let it not be suggested that the guide to hackdom is under-thumbed in Bellos's house. Heggie had, no doubt, the best of intentions and was dead serious when he told Bellos that Curls and Dimples, "two mischievous tots previously seen on the inside pages", were contenders for Desperate Dan's cover spot on **The Dandy**.

The Sun seemed to have little difficulty in attributing Dan's return, seven days after he retired, to its own campaign. Only a cynic would see it as a self-fulfilling prophecy, given that the paper had gone to bed – in metaphorical terms, of course – with the comic's publisher.

A hint of indignation crept into **The Guardian**'s piece, a week after Bellos's, when Kamal Ahmed wrote: *The whiff of publicity stunt joined the aromas of cow pie and owl hoot juice after Dandy announced yesterday that Desperate Dan would return to the comic a week after being axed as too old-fashioned.*

DC Thomson said that due to "unprecedented" public opposition the country's favourite cowboy would be resurrected for the 60th anniversary issue.

The "unprecedented" public opposition, of course, was **The Sun**'s campaign. No comment was offered by the previously verbose Dave Donaldson, the **Dandy** group's managing editor.

The press's response to the "Dan's done" story was atypical, with DC Thomson ending up with its bread buttered on both sides.

But even the Scottish ones cannot live on bread alone.

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WHETHER YOU ARE BUYING OR SELLING I'M THE ONE YOU WANT TO TALK TO. FROM BOLLAND TO BISLEY TO FABRY TO MIGNOLA. I HANDLE SOME OF THE FINEST AND MOST DIVERSE TALENTS PRODUCING ART TODAY. AS WELL AS, WHEN AVAILABLE, THE GREATS FROM COMICS HISTORY: KIRBY, TOTH, WRIGHTSON, ETC. THE LIST GOES ON AND ON AND IF YOU'RE SELLING I'LL OFFER THE BEST PRICE AROUND FOR SINGLE PAGES OR ENTIRE COLLECTIONS.

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RETAIL INDEX

Key to abbreviations used:

imp	= air imported new issues	u/g	= underground comics
back	= back issues stocked	frgn	= foreign language titles
s-p	= small press & fanzines	gn	= graphic novels & trade paperback editions
merch	= trading cards, videos, T-shirts, posters, models, etc	STO	= standing order service, (new comics reserved)
ind	= US independent comics (non-newsstand & manga)	RPG	= role playing games
Brit	= British comics & albums	CCG	= customisable card games

CENTRAL LONDON

■ **Adventureland Inc**, 309 Railton Rd, Herne Hill, London SE24 0JN. Tues-Sat 11-6.30; Sun 12-4. (imp, back, gn, merch, STO, collectable toys, kits, games, videos) 0171 346 0020

■ **Avalon Comics**, 143 Lavender Hill, London SW11. Mon-Thur 10-5.45; Fri 10-6.30; Sat 9.30-5.30; Sun 11-3.30 (imp, back, merch, ind, Brit, gn, STO, CCG) 0171-924 3609

■ **Book & Comic Exchange**, 14 Pembridge Road, Notting Hill Gate, London W11. Mon-Sun: 10-8. Nothing legal refused (back, ind, Brit, u/g, gn) 0171 229 8420

■ **Comic Showcase**, 76 Neal St, London WC2. Mon - Wed 10-6; Thurs - Sat 10-7; Sun 12-5 (imp, back s-p, merch, ind, u/g, Brit, gn, cartoon books, original art) 0171-240 3664

■ **Forbidden Planet**, 71 New Oxford St, London WC1A 1DG. Mon-Wed & Sat 10-6; Thurs & Fri 10-7 (imp, back s-p, merch, ind, u/g, Brit, gn, film & tv) 0171 836 4179

■ **Gosh!** 39 Great Russell Street, London WC1 (opposite British Museum) 10-6 7 days a week inc Bank Hols. Late Thur-Fri til 7 (imp, back, merch, ind, Brit, frgn, u/g, gn, STO, largest range of newspaper strip compilations in UK) 0171 636 1011

■ **Mega-City Comics**, 18 Inverness Street, Camden Town, London NW1 7HJ. Mon-Sun 10-6; late Thurs + Fri to 7. (imp, back, merch, s-p, ind, Brit, u/g, gn, film-tv fantasy, horror, body art, subculture, STO) 0171 485 9320

■ **Mighty World of Comicana 2**, 237 Shaftsbury Ave, London WC1. Mon-Wed 10.30-6.30; Thur-Sat 10.00-7; Sun 10-4 (imp, back, s-p, ind, Brit, u/g, tv-film & fantasy, gn, STO) 0171 836 5630

■ **Platinum Age Comics/Bayswater Books**, 27a Craven Terrace, Lancaster Gate, London W2 3EL. Mon-Sun 11-7 (but sometimes till midnight!) (back, ind, u/g, general 2nd hand books, search service) 0171 402 7398

■ **Zephyr TUC Comic Mart**, Congress Centre, 23 Great Russell St, London WC1. Sun Jan 18; noon-4pm (free; imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, Brit, gn, RPG, CCG) 0151 638 1502

OUTER LONDON

NEW **A Place in Space**, 56/57 The Inshops, Church St., Croydon, Surrey CR0 1RB. Mon-Sat 9.30-5.30 (comics, SF bks, Brit, back, merch, ind, gn, STO, RPG, CCG, a/wk, accessories) 0181 686 2400

■ **Altered Images**, 3 Eagle Star House, 299-301 High St, Sutton, Surrey SM1 1LG. Mon-Wed & Fri 10.30-5.30; Thur 10-7; Sat 9-6 (imp back ind merch Brit gn STO) 0181 770 3815

■ **Atomic Comics**, 1112 High Rd, Chadwell Heath, Romford, Essex RM6 4AH. Mon-Sat 10 -6 excl Fri 10-7 (imp, back, s-p, ind, merch, u/g, Brit, gn, STO, 2nd hand horror fantasy sf bks, original art) 0181-597 8547

■ **Blue Silver Comics**, 32 Northfield Ave, West Ealing, London W13 9RL. Mon-Sun 10.00-6.00 excl Wed 10-2 (imp, back, merch, ind, gn, STO) Website: www.bluesilver.com 0181 840 9446

■ **Book Gallery: The Illustrated Book Shop**, 11-17 Stockwell St, Greenwich, London SE10 9JN. Tues-Fri 10-6, Sat & Sun 9.30-5.30 (imp, back, ind, gn, u/g, 2nd hand & new SF-horror-fantasy bks, art bks, bargain bks, remainders, art prints) 0181 853 2151

■ **Book Palace**, 83 Church Road, Crystal Palace, London SE. Mon-Sun 12-6 (imp back ind gn 2nd hand/new SF-horror-fantasy bks art bks, bargain bks, remainders 0181 768 0022

■ **Calamity Comics**, 160 Station Road, Harrow, Middlesex HA1 2HR. Mon-Wed 10-6, Thurs & Fri 10-7; Sat 9.30-6 (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, u/g, Brit, gn, RPG, STO, fantasy tv & film bks & merch, videos) 0181-427 3831

■ **Comic Shack**, 720 High Rd, Leytonstone, London E11 3NN. Mon-Thur 9.30-5.30; Fri-Sat 9.30-6.30; Sun 11-5 + by appointment (imp gn back hbks) 0181-539 7260 or 555 9303(eve)

■ **Forbidden Planet**, 175 North End, Croydon CR0 1TP. Mon-Sat 9.30-5.30; Thurs till 7. (imp, back, ind, gn, merch, Brit, STO, CCGs, film/tv mags, sf/fantasy bks, videos) 0181 688 7190

■ **Kent Comics**, 42 Well Hall Rd, Eltham, London SE9 6SF. Mon Tues Thur Sat 10-5, Fri 10-6, closed Wed & Sun (imp, back, merch, gn, STO, CCG) 0181 850 5779

■ **Krypton Komics**, 252 High Road, Tottenham, London N15 4AJ (next to Tesco) Mon-Wed 10-6; Thur-Fri 9.30-7; Sat 9-6. Tube: Seven Sisters Rd. (imp, back, s-p, ind, gn, STO) 0181-801 5378

■ **Mighty World of Comicana**, 125 East Barnet Rd, Barnet, Herts EN4 8RF. Mon-Wed 10.30-6.30; Thur-Sat 10-7; Sun 10-4 (imp, back, s-p, ind, Brit, u/g tv-film & fantasy gn STO) 0181-449 5535

■ **They Walk Among Us**, 32 Union Court, Sheen Rd, Richmond, Surrey TW9 1AA. Mon-Sat 9.30-5.30 excl Fri 9.30-6 (imp, merch, back, ind, Brit, u/g, gn, fantasy/s-f/horror bks, STO, sub-culture) Phone/fax 0181 948 8476

■ **30th Century Comics** *is now at:* 18 Lower Richmond Road, London SW15 1JP. Mon-Wed 10.30-6, Thur-Fri 10.30-7, Sat 9-6; Sun 11-5 (imp, back, merch, action figures & toys, ind, gn, STO, 2nd hand genre bks) 0181 788 2052

■ **Time Trek**, 46 High Street, Bromley, Kent BR1 1TR. Mon - Sat 9 - 5.30 (late Thurs to 8) (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, Brit, u/g, gn, sf TV & film related merch, STO) 0181 313 0677

SOUTH EAST

■ **ACE Comics**, 1 Headgate Buildings, St John's St, Colchester, Essex C02 7AD. Mon-Sat 10-5.30 (imp back s-p merch u/g Brit ind gn STO RPG rock t-shirts) 01206 561912

■ **The American Comic Shop**, 1 Church St, Chatham, Kent ME4 4BS (just off High St). Mon-Thurs 10-5.30, Fri 9.30-5.30, Sat 9-5.30. (imp, back, gn, STO, merch, Trek & Star Wars merch, ind, original artwork) 01634 817410

■ **Andy's Comic Cavern**, Windsor Open Market (back of Woolworth's), Bachelors Acre, Windsor. Saturdays only 7.30-4.00 (imp, back, ind, gn, STO) Free delivery for Windsor & Slough area. 01753 621978

■ **Calamity Comics 2**, 90 Queens Road, The Broadway, Watford, Herts WD1 2LA. Mon-Tues 10-5.30; closed Wed; Thurs & Fri 10-7; Sat 9.30-5.30 (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, u/g, Brit, gn, STO, RPG, fantasy tv & film bks & merch, videos) 01923 249293

■ **Cartoon Shop**, 22 Southernhay, Town Centre, Basildon, Essex SS14 1EL. Mon - Sat 10.00-6.00 (imp, back, s-p, ind, merch, Brit, u/g, gn, RPG) 01268 534194

■ **Central City Comics**, 4 Eagle Street, Ipswich, Suffolk IP4 1JB. Mon - Sat 10.00 - 6.00. (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, u/g, Brit, frgn, gn, STO) 01473 233017

■ **Comic Showcase**, 19-20 St Clements St, Oxford. Mon-Sat 10-6 (imp, back, s-p, ind, merch, u/g, gn, STO) 01865-723680

■ **David's Comic Shop**, 5 Sydney Street, Brighton, Sussex BN1 4EN. Mon-Sat 9.30-5.45; Sun 11-4 (imp, back, ind, u/g, STO, gn) 01273 691012

■ **Daydream Nation Trading Cards at Hive**, 6 Kensington Gardens, Brighton BN1 4AL. Mon-Sat 10.00-6.00 (trading cards, CCGs, sports, Ultra-Pro) 01273 687 802

■ **Escape**, Cheapside, Reading, Berkshire RG1 7AG (near Odeon Cinema). Tues-Sat 10.00-5.30 (imp, back, ind, merch, gn, STO, film & tv) 01734 575131

■ **Fantastic Store Ink**, 14 Gardner Street, Brighton BN1 1UP. Mon-Fri 9.30-5.30; Sat 9-6. (imp, back, ind, s-p, merch, Brit, u/g, STO, original art) 01273 670012

■ **Forbidden Planet**, 60 Burleigh St. Cambridge CB1 1DJ. Mon-Sat 9.30-6 (imp, back, ind, gn, Brit, u/g, STO, CCG, videos, sf/fantasy bks, tv/film mags, merch) 01223 301 666

■ **Incognito Comic Shop**, 1-2 The Friars, Canterbury, Kent CT1 2AS. Mon-Fri 10-5.30; Sat 9-5.30 (imp, back, ind, merch, gn, Brit, STO, film/tv merch) phone/fax: 01227 785898

■ **Incognito Comic Shop**, 21 Union Street, Maidstone, Kent ME14 1EB. Mon-Fri 10-5.30; Sat 9-5.30 (imp, back, ind, merch, gn, Brit, STO, film/tv merch) phone/fax: 01622-683642

■ **Into the Void**, 324-325 Chartwell North, Top Floor, Victoria Plaza, Southend-on-Sea, Essex SS2 5SR. Mon-Sat 9.30-5.30 (imp back merch ind Brit u/g gn STO)

■ **Kingdom Comics**, Chelmsford Covered Market. Thurs-Fri 8.30-4; Sat 8.30-5 (imp, back, merch, gn, STO) 01245 350383

■ **MTCC Trading Cards**, c/o In Retrospect, 107-109 Orpington High St, Orpington, Kent BR6 0LG. Mon-Sat 10-5. (trading cards, Trek-Disney-fantasy-etc) 01689 835700

■ **Off World: The Sci-Fi Store**, Unit 20, Romford Shopping Halls, Market Place, Romford, Essex RM1 3AT. Mon-Sat 9.30-5 (merch s-p imp STO CCG; specialists in Trek, Star Wars & s-f collectables) 01708 765633

■ **Reservoir Frogs at Hive**, 6 Kensington Gardens, Brighton BN1 1AL. Mon-Sat 8.30-6.00; Sun 11-5 (imp, back, gn, STO, u/g, ind) phone/fax: 01273 687802

■ **Slough Computers**, 2 Windsor Road, Slough, Berks. Mon-Sat 9.30-5.30 (imp, ind, STO, cards, s/h computer games) 01753 521594

■ **Tall Toad Comics**, Amersham Market - every Tues; Hemel Hempstead market - every Thursday, High Wycombe market - every Friday & Saturday. (imp, back, merch, gn, STO). 01442 250653

■ **Whatever Comics**, 2 Burgate Lane, Canterbury, Kent CT1 2HH. Mon - Sat 10.00 -5.30 (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, Brit, u/g, gn, STO, model kits) 01227 453226

■ **Whatever Comics**, 5 Middle Row, High Street, Maidstone, Kent ME14 1TF. Mon-Sat 10.00-5.30 (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, Brit, u/g, gn, STO, model kits) 01622 681041

MIDLANDS

■ **A Collectors Dream**, 16 Park St., Kingswinford DY6 9LX, West Midlands. Mon-Sat (closed Thur) 9.30-5.30 (imp back s-p merch ind Brit u/g gn STO film/tv fantasy glamour horror ppbks toys videos. Buy-sell-exchange) 01384 287234

■ **Abstract Sprocket**, St Benedicts Indoor Market, 21 St Benedicts St, Norwich, Norfolk NR2 4PF. Mon-Sat 10-5 (imp, back, ind, s-p, merch, Brit, u/g, gn, STO) 01603 292315

■ **Another World**, 42/43 Main Centre (opp Wilkinsons) Derby. Mon-Sat 9-5.30 (imp, back, ind, merch, Brit, u/g, gn, STO, RPG, t-shirts, rock & TV-film memorabilia, computer games) 01332 206606

■ **Another World**, 23 Silver Street, Leicester LE1 5EU. Mon - Sat 9.00 - 5.30 (imp, back, ind, merch, Brit, frgn, u/g, gn, STO, RPG, rock t-shirts, alchemy metalware, rock memorabilia) 0116 2515266

■ **Another World**, 11 Market Street, Nottingham. Mon-Sat 10-5.30 (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, Brit, frgn, u/g, gn, STO, RPG, rock t-shirts, alchemy metalware, rock memorabilia) 0115 9484122

■ **Comic Connections**, 66 Calthorpe St., Banbury, Oxon OX16 8EX. Mon-Sat 10-5. (imp, back, ind, CCG, STO, merch, model/resin kits inc wholesale) ph/fax: 01295 268989

■ **Comics Unlimited**, 4 Clair Court, Lime Street, Bedford MK40 1NH. Mon-Sat 9.30-5.30 (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, gn, Brit, u/g, STO, RPG) 01234 218984

■ **Comics Unlimited**, 26 Town Centre, Hatfield, Herts AL10 0LD. Mon, Tues, Thur-Fri 10.30-6, Sat 9-5.30. Sun 12-4 (imp back s-p merch ind Brit gn STO RPG) 01707 256788

■ **Comics Unlimited**, Unit 11, The Arcade, Letchworth, Hertfordshire. Mon-Sat 9-5.30 (closed Wed) (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, gn, Brit, u/g, STO, RPG) 01462 480018

■ **Fantasy World**, 10 Market Square Arcade, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent ST1 1NU. Mon-Sat 9- 5.30 (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, Brit, frgn, u/g, gn, STO, RPG, rock t-shirts, alchemy metalware, rock memorabilia) 01782 279294/fax 01782 202381

■ **Forbidden Planet**, 31 Cross Cheaping, Coventry CV1 1HF. Mon-Sat 9.30-6.00; Thurs till 7.00 (imp, back, merch, ind, Brit, u/g, gn, STO, film/ tv material, sf/horror bks; CCG, RPG) 01203 229672

■ **Forbidden Planet**, 129 Middle Walk, Broadmarsh Centre, Nottingham NG1 7LN. Mon-Sat 9-6 (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, Brit, u/g, gn, film/tv, videos, STO) 0115 958 4706

■ **Ground Zero**, 11 Handley Arcade, Mansfield, Notts NG18 1NQ. Mon - Sat 9.00 - 5.00 (imp, back, merch, ind, Brit, STO, accessories) 01623 22017

■ **Nostalgia & Comics**, 14-16 Smallbrook, Queensway, Birmingham. Mon - Thurs 9.15 - 5.45, Fri + Sat 9.15 - 6.00 (imp, back, merch, gn, ind, s-p, u/g, Brit, STO) 0121 643 0143

■ **Nowhere Comics**, 3 Kings Court, Bridge St (next to Bridge St Records) Walsall. Mon-Sat 9.00-5.30 (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, u/g, gn, STO, frgn, accessories) 01922 643352

■ **Page 45**, 9 Market Street, Nottingham NG1 6HY. Mon-Sat 9-6. (imp, back, s-p, ind, Brit, frgn, u/g, gn, STO, indie comix & indie merch specialists, manga) 0115 9508045

■ **Phoenix Comix**, 29 Abington Square, Northampton NN1 4AE. Mon-Sat 9.30-5.00 (imp, back, merch, ind, u/g, gn, STO, RPG, CCG & action figures) 01604 602311

■ **Time Zone** *is now at:* 31 Castle St, Shrewsbury, Shropshire SY1 2BW. Mon - Sat 9.30 - 5.30. (imp, back, merch, ind, gn, STO, CCG) 01743 365192

NORTH WEST

■ **Alpha Omega Comics**, 33-35 Library St, Wigan, Lancs. WN1 1NN. Mon-Sat 9.30-5 (imp back merch ind gn STO) 01942 233035

■ **Comic Zone**, 4 Church Rd, Northwich, Cheshire CW9 5NT (imp, back, merch, ind, gn, STO, RPG, Brit) 01606 49255

■ **Forbidden Planet**, 92 Bold St, Liverpool L1 4HR. Mon-Sat 9.30-5.30; Thur to 7.00 (imp, back merch, ind, Brit, u/g, STO, film/tv material, sf & horror bks, RPG, CCG) 0151 707 1491

■ **Forbidden Planet Megastore**, 65 Oldham St, Piccadilly, Manchester M1 1JR. Mon-Sat 9.30-5.30 (imp, back, sf-fantasy bks, cards, stills, LF film bks, Star Trek, Doctor Who, etc) 0161 839 4777

■ **Thunderbooks**, 332 Lytham Rd, Blackpool FY4 1DW. 10-5.30 Mon-Tues Thurs-Sat (& Sundays June-Oct inc.); Wed 1.00-3.30 (imp, back, merch, ind, Brit, gn, STO, media collectors' items) 01253-348321 fax: 407813

■ **Thunderbooks II**, 116 Friargate, Preston, PR1 9EE. Mon-Sat 10-5.30 (imp, back, merch, s-p, ind, Brit, gn, STO, RPG) 01772-204287

■ **Time Zone**, 3 Academy Place, Warrington, Cheshire WA1 2NR. Mon-Sat 10-6 (imp, back, merch, ind, gn, STO, CCG) 01925 651185

■ **Worlds Apart**, 58-60 Lime St (city centre), Liverpool. Mon-Sat 10-6 excl Fri 10-7 (imp, back, ind, merch, s-p, u/g, Brit, gn, STO, fantasy film mags) 0151 707 0839

■ **Zephyr Comic Mart**, Concert Hall, Bluecoat Chambers, School Lane, Liverpool. Next mart: Saturday Dec 27; 11-4pm (75p; imp, back, gn, merch ind Brit u/g RPG CCG) 0151 638 1502

NORTH EAST

■ **Books N' Comics**, Unit 15, Forbes Building, Linthorpe Road, Middlesbrough, Cleveland TS1 4AW. Mon-Sat 10-5.30 (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, u/g, gn, STO, fantasy gn, film mags, Dr Who, Trek) 01642 249143

■ **Comic Carnage**, 22 Portland St., Lincoln LN5 7JX Mon-Fri (excl Tues-Wed; closed) 9.30-4; Sat 9.30-5.30; Sun 10.30-4 (imp, back, merch, ind, gn, STO) 01522 520087

■ **Comicville**, Ground Floor, 54 The Arcade, The Piece Hall, Halifax HX1 1RE, Yorkshire. Tues-Fri 9.30-5; Sat 10-5 Sun 11-5 (imp, back, ind, merch, Brit, u/g, gn, STO, model kits, toys, Who, Trek, videos) 01422 351119

■ **Comicville**, 24 Imperial Arcade, Huddersfield HD1 2BR. Mon-Sat 9.30-5.30 (imp, back, ind, merch, gn, STO, RPG, models, Star Wars, videos) 01484 455044

■ **Forbidden Planet**, 30 Eastgate, The Headrow, Leeds LS2 7JL. Mon-Sat 9.30-5.30 (imp, back, LF film books, media-tv-film mags, T-shirts, posters, toys, kits, cards, badges, stills, Trek, Dr Who, etc) 0113 242 6325

■ **Forbidden Planet**, 59 Grainger St., Newcastle NE1 5JE. Mon-Sat 10-6 (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, Brit, u/g, gn, STO, film/tv mags, fantasy/sf bks, videos) 0191 261 9173

■ **Forbidden Planet**, 12 Matilda, off the Moor, Sheffield, Yorks. Mon-Fri 10-6; Sat 9.15- 5.30 (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, Brit, u/g, gn, original art, model kits, sf & fantasy gns, horror mags, newspaper strip bks) 0114 276 9475

■ **Galaxy 4**, 493 Glossop Road, Broomhill, Sheffield S10 2QE. Mon-Sat 10-5 (imp, back, sp, merch, ind, gn, STO, Dr Who & Star Wars specialists, tv ppbks) 0114 268 4976

■ **The Last Picture Show**, 38-39 The Lanes, The Oasis, Meadowhall Centre, Sheffield S9 1EP. Mon-Thurs 10-8, Fri 10-9, Sat 9-7, Sun 11-5. (imp, back, merch, ind, Brit, gn, STO, RPG, CCG, film/tv/rock memorabilia) 0114 256 9604/ fax 0114 255 3399

■ **Off-World Comics**, 200 Park View, Whitley Bay, Tyne & Wear NE26 3QP. Mon-Thu 10-5.30; Fri 10-6; Sat 10-5.30 (imp, back, merch, ind, Brit, gn, STO, CCG) 0191 251 2288

■ **Sheffield Space Centre**, 33 The Wicker, Sheffield, Yorks. Mon - Sat 10.00 - 5.00 excl Wed. (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, gn, STO, Star Trek items) 0114 275 8905

■ **Travelling Man**, 23 Headingley Lane, Hyde Park Corner, Headingley, Leeds LS6 1BL. Mon-Sat 10.30-5.45 (imp, back, merch, ind, gn, STO, RPG, CCG) 0113 278 0417

■ **Travelling Man**, Unit 8/9 The Corn Exchange, Call Lane, Leeds LS1 7BR. Mon-Thur 10-5.30, Fri-Sat 9-5.30, Sun 11-5 (imp back merch ind STO RPG CCG) 0113 242 7227

■ **The Twilight Zone** *is now at:* 69 Godwin St, Bradford, Yorkshire. Mon-Sat 10.30-5.30 (imp, back, ind, gn, STO) 01274 745567

■ **Travelling Man**, 54 Goodramgate, York YO1 2LF. Mon-Sat 10-5.30 (imp, back, merch, ind, gn, STO, RPG, CCG) 01904 628787

WEST COUNTRY

■ **American Dream Comics**, Unit 2, 17 Pickwick Road, Corsham, Wilts SN13 9BQ. Mon-Thurs 10.00-5.00, Fri & Sat 9.00-6.00 (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, u/g, gn, STO, original art, hobby kits, CDs) 01249 701647

■ **Area 51**, 143 Gloucester Rd, Bristol. Mon-Sat 10-5.30 (imp back ind gn merch STO RPG u/g Brit original art) 0117 924 4655

■ **Code X**, 1 Lansdowne Cres, Bournemouth, Dorset BH1 1RU. Tues-Sat 10-6 (imp, back, merch, ind, Brit, gn, STO, FRPG & miniatures, Games Workshop specialist) 01202 293054

■ **Floppy Tongue Comics**, 96 Fisherton Street, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP2 7QY. Mon-Fri 11.30-5.30; Sat 9-5.30 (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, u/g, gn, STO) 01722 331107

■ **Forbidden Planet**, 30 Penn Street, Bristol BS1 3AS. Mon-Fri 9.30-5.30 (Thurs until 7), Sat 9.30-6 (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, Brit, u/g, gn, film & TV, videos STO sub-culture/body art) 0117 929 8692

■ **Forever People**, 35 Park Street, Bristol BS1 5NH. Mon-Sat 10.00-6.00 (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, Brit, u/g, gn, STO, sf/fantasy new & 2nd hand bks, RPG, videos, tv sf memorabilia, sub-culture, body art) 0117 926 5454

■ **Kathies Comics**, 20 Market Avenue, Plymouth, PL1 1PH. Mon - Fri 9.30 - 5.30; Sat 9.00 - 5.30. (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, Brit, gn, STO) 01752 257800

■ **Krackers Comics & Games**, 5 Bath Place, Taunton, Somerset TA1 4ER. Mon-Sat 9.30-5.30 (imp, ind, merch, gn, STO, RPG, CCG, Games Workshop, film/tv models, action figures, toys) 01823 335057

■ **Krackers Comics & Games**, 1-5 The Fore Street Centre, Fore Street, Exeter, Devon EX4 3AN. Mon-Sat 9.30-5.30 (imp, ind, merch, gn, STO, RPG, CCG, Games Workshop, film/tv models, action figures, toys) 01392 425248

■ **Paradox Comics**, 103 Old Town Market, Dear Hay Lane, Poole, Dorset BH15 1NZ. Mon-Fri 10.30-5; Sat 10-5 (imp, back, ind, merch, Brit, gn, STO, videos) 01202 661346

■ **Purple Haze Comics, Records & Books**, 38 Eastlake Walk, Drakes Circus Shopping Centre, Plymouth, Devon PL1 1BX. Mon-Fri 10.00-5.30, Sat 9.00-5.30 (imp, back, s-p, ind, Brit, u/g, gn, STO, mags, merch, film/tv material, sf/horror bks, gen bks, videos, Trek/Wars merch, tapes/cds) 01752 254136

■ **True Believers Comic Shop**, 11 Rodbourne Rd, Swindon, Wilts SN2 2AG. Tue-Sat 9-5 (imp back merch gn STO) 01793 434363

ISLE OF WIGHT

■ **Astounding Comics**, 61 Pyle Street, Newport, Isle of Wight P030 1UL. Mon - Sat 9.00 - 5.30. (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, Brit, gn, STO, RPG) 01983 525320

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■ **Cardiff Fantasy Centre**, 1st Floor, Jacobs Market, West Canal Wharf, Cardiff. Sats only 9.30-5 (imp, back s-p, merch, ind, gn, STO, videos; established 14 yrs) 01222 563005

■ **The Comic Man**, opposite the Model Stall, Provision Market Gallery, High St., Newport, Gwent. Sats only 8.30-5. (sf & horror mags, manga, ind, Brit, u/g, cheap gn, back: from 2p-20p, different stock weekly)

■ **Comix Shoppe**, 13 Shoppers Walk, Swansea SA1 3AY. Mon-Fri 10.00-5.00, Sat 10.00-5.30 (imp, back, merch, ind, Brit, u/g, gn, STO, RPG, manga videos, Games Workshop stockists, CCG) 01792 642097

■ **Forbidden Planet**, 5 Duke Street, Cardiff. Mon-Sat 10-5.30 (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, u/g, Brit, frgn, gn, STO) 01222 228885

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■ **A1 Books & Comics**, 31-35 Parnie Street, Glasgow G1 5RJ. Mon-Wed 9.30-5.30; Thurs-Sat 9.30-6; Sun 12-5 (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, u/g, Brit, gn, STO) 0141 552 6692

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■ **City Centre Comics**, 168 Buchanan St, Glasgow G1 2LW. Mon-Wed 10-5.30; Thurs + Fri 10-6; Sat 10-5.30; Sun 12.00-5.00. (back issues only) 0141 331 1215 (eves: 632 2786)

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■ **Justice Comics**, Unit 36, The Arcade, Stirling FK8 1AX. Mon-Sat 10-5. (imp, back, ind, gn, STO, merch) 01786 447687

■ **Plan 9 Comics**, 9 Rosemount Viaduct, Aberdeen AB1 1NE. Mon - Sat 9.30 - 5.30 (Thurs till 7.30), Sun 1.00 - 4.30. (imp, back, Trek/Wars merch, ind, Brit, u/g, gn, RPG & war game specialist, MTG, STO, kits, magick/tarot) phone/fax: 01224 624467

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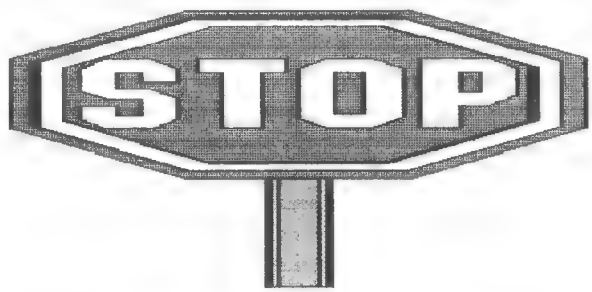
■ **Forbidden Planet**, 36 Dawson Street, Dublin 2. Mon-Sat 10.00-6.00 excl Thurs 10.00-7.00; Sun 12-5 (imp, back, s-p, ind, merch, u/g, Brit, gn, STO) 0035 3167 10688



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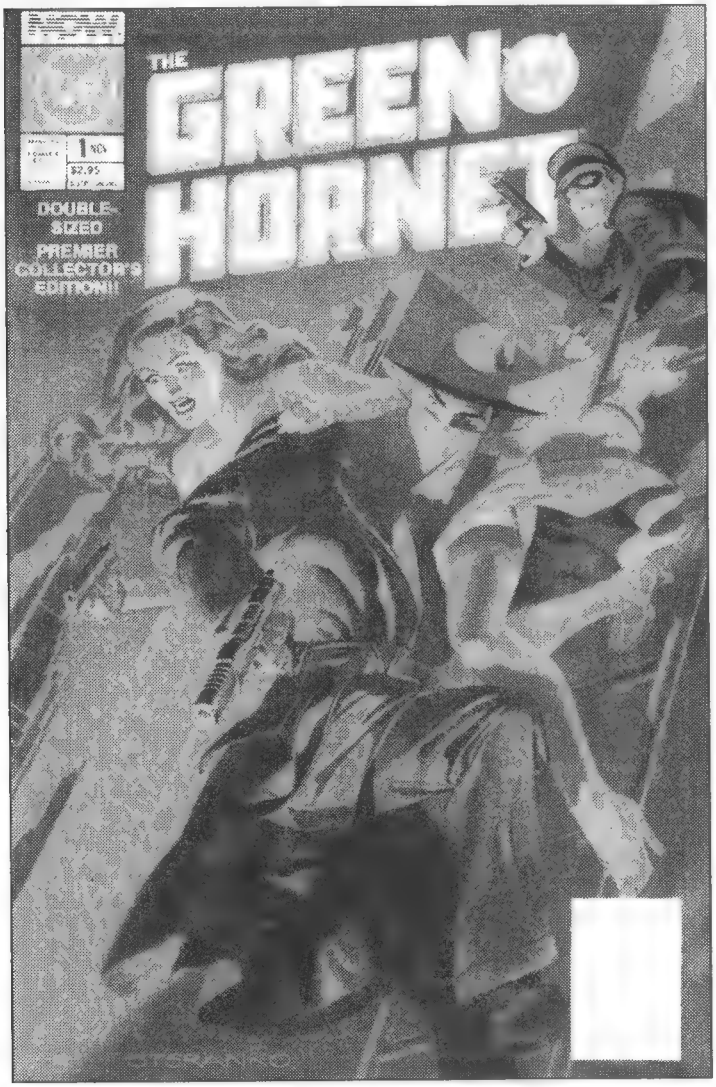
FRAME TO FRAME

The comics medium has had a strong interaction with film and TV for as long as each has existed, inspired by licence or plagarism. Mike Conroy looks at the latest events.



ABOVE: The cover to ***The Green Hornet*** *#1 [Now Comics 1989] featuring Jim Steranko's classic depiction of the radio/film/TV/comics superhero.*

The Green Hornet rides with Dark Horse

Movie slate includes Batman forerunner plus Hellboy, Apparition and Mystery Men

DARK Horse Entertainment recently told *Frame to Frame* that among the many screen projects it is currently producing is *The Green Hornet*.

The only movie on the Dark Horse schedule not based on a Dark Horse comic, *The Green Hornet* has been floating around Hollywood for some years. At one time *Batman & Robin*'s George Clooney was cast in the title role.

The screenplay for the movie is by Ed Neumier who also wrote *Robocop* [1987] and one of this year's science fiction blockbusters, *Starship Troopers*. Michael Gordy is attached to direct.

The Green Hornet originally appeared on a 1936 radio show. A modern-day version of the Lone Ranger, the Hornet is cited by Bob Kane as an influence in the creation of Batman.

The Hornet made his first jump to the movies and into comics in 1940 but his star waned in the early 1950s. It wasn't until 1966 that he again came to prominence with *The Green Hornet* TV series. By the producers of the camp '60s *Batman* show, it lasted only two seasons and is best-remembered for the late Bruce Lee's portrayal of Kato, the Hornet's "Robin".

A spin-off Gold Key comic series survived only three issues and it wasn't until 1989 that a **Green Hornet** comic appeared again. Published by Now Comics, it lasted until 1994.

Dark Horse Comics is now attempting to acquire the Green Hornet comic book rights to complement its sister company's movie licence.

Hellboy and Ghost

Among the Dark Horse film projects spinning off from its comics is a movie based on Mike Mignola's cult title **Hellboy**.

Peter Briggs is currently working on the screenplay for the *Hellboy* movie which is in active development at Universal. Briggs previously wrote the script for the aborted *Aliens vs Predator* movie.

Also at Universal is *Apparition*, a movie based on **Ghost** *(shown top left)*. Scripted by **Ghost** writer Eric Luke, the project has been renamed *Apparition*, to avoid confusion with the 1990 hit movie *Ghost*, starring Patrick Swayze and Demi Moore.

Pit Bulls

A *Pit Bulls* movie is also in development at Universal, with George Nolfi working on the screenplay.

This movie features the characters introduced by Dark Horse Comics in **Arcadia**, the first wave of its **Comics' Greatest World** launch [June 1993].

Intended as springboard for a Dark Horse superhero universe, **Comics Greatest World** introduced 16 new characters and teams, among them Barb Wire and Ghost. Eight continuing titles and a handful of one-shots were spawned by the launch. But these did not include a Pit Bulls series and **Ghost** is the only survivor of the entire line.

Mystery Men

Originally announced as being directed by and starring Danny DeVito, *Mystery Men* is an action comedy also set up at Universal.

With DeVito no longer attached to this project based on characters in Bob Burden's **Flaming Carrot Comics**, *Mystery Men* will be directed by *Cable Guy*'s Ben Stiller.

Principal photography is expected to commence in June.

Animation

Sony Animation is working in conjunction with Dark Horse Entertainment to produce an animated TV series based on Arthur Adams' **Monkeyman & O'Brien** and Frank Miller and Geof Darrow's **Big Guy and Rusty, the Boy Robot**. Both projects are actively being shopped around the networks.

Provided the TV pilots are aired and go to series, the intention is to then bring at least them to cinemas as full-length animated features.

TV anthology

Dark Horse Presents is a planned cable TV anthology series taken from the cornerstone of Dark Horse's publishing world.

Before moving the project to the next stage, Dark Horse is hoping to secure the involvement of two more writer/directors.

Already on board is Gil Adler who worked on HBO's *Tales from the Crypt* and *Perversions of Science* series. Adler also directed *Tales from the Crypt: Bordello of Blood* for Universal

Black Cross and Concrete

The movie adaptation of Chris Warner's **Black Cross** is in development while Disney has Paul Chadwick's **Concrete** in active development.

What that means in our language is that *Concrete* is a bit closer to being made than *Black Cross*.

Virus

Virus, the movie based on the 1992 mini-series by Chuck Pfarrer (story) and Howard Cobb and Jimmy Palmiotti (art), is ready for release with trailers scheduled to screen in the US shortly.

Directed by John Bruno, *Virus* stars Jamie Lee Curtis and Donald Sutherland. Bruno previously won an Academy Award for Special Effects for his work on James Cameron's *True Lies*, which co-starred Arnold Schwarzenegger and Jaimie Lee Curtis.

Liefeld's Mark developed for Men in Black's Smith

UNIVERSAL Studios has acquired *The Mark*, a speculative screenplay by Awesome's Rob Liefeld, in what was announced as "a lucrative seven figure deal".

The project will be developed for *Men in Black*'s Will Smith after he has completed the movie remake of *The Wild, Wild West* TV series for Warner Bros.

Apparently *The Mark* was the subject of interest from several studios but was seen by Universal as a possible new franchise for Smith who will produce the movie along with partner James Lassiter and Liefeld.

The story of *The Mark* is set in the final hours of the coming millennium. It centres on a universal struggle and an ancient talisman of power.

Liefeld's other projects in development in Hollywood include *Avengelyne* and *Badrock*, both with New Line Cinema.

Cross-ed wires... Bank on it

FORMER Dark Horse Comics PR and publicity main man Lou Bank contacted *Frame to Frame* to straighten out some Hollywood babble in our report on the planned *Cross* movie (CI 88).

Bank pointed out that the "three short novels" referred to the *Big picture at Vachss Cross* piece already exist. According to Bank, it is Book #1 (**Cross: Genesis**) that is the property optioned by New Line, not the Dark Horse comic.

Filling in some background, Bank explained that the books had already been sold in a three-book deal but the writers pulled it because the publisher wouldn't meet some of Messrs Vachss and Colbert's terms and conditions.

Deciding to reverse the usual book-to-movie process with which Vachss is all-too-well experienced, the pair decided to go with a movie first and sell the book rights after. They intend to hold back any book deal until the first movie is in production.

Bank also said that as anyone who has read the Cross material in **Born Bad** knows Hollywood PRs got it totally wrong. The story is hardly one of "childhood friends who fight urban crime". In fact, it is about abandoned and abused children who bonded in prison, in forced labour camps, and in the military. These are mercenaries and criminals!

Bank concluded by saying, "Now everyone can read **Born Bad** and go back to their casting discussions, because the comic book is no reference at all."

ALL WE HAVE TO DO IS GET FROM SHEFFERHAM TO CANNES ! I WONDER IF WE'LL GET TO SEE JOE L. SLIPPAMUCKER OR THE FAMOUS ERNIE SCHWARZENSTRUDEL !!
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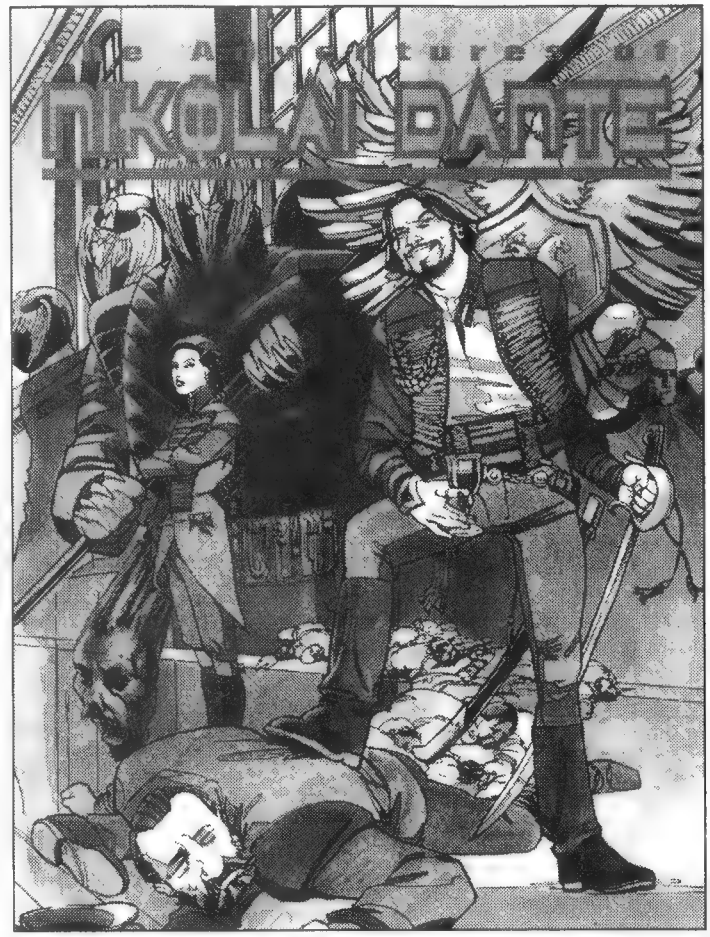
MYCHAILO KAZYBRID

UPON hearing that West Country Productions is to present his Do-Do Man character (shown above) to the movie world at the Cannes Film Festival, Sheffield-based creator Mychailo Kazybrid commented, "Needless to say, this is great news for Do-Doism. I'm constantly encouraged by the good faith of both the readers and the retailers. I wonder if the balaclava will go down big in Hollywood?"



Creators produce bibles for 2000AD TV projects

FLEETWAY Film and Television (FFTV) has been established to produce screen projects based on characters from 2000AD.

The company was launched a year ago with 12 proposals for film or TV development. Now focusing on the more accessable medium of TV, five are being developed as possible series.

With "high concept" descriptions in each characters full-colour portfolio, they are being sold as:

- *Nikolai Dante* – Too cool to kill, Nikolai Dante is a fast-talking reckless rogue living on borrowed time in 21st Century Russia where Mafiya clans rule the land that spawned them.
- *Strontium Dog* – A bloody tale of retribution and redemption played out against the savage backdrop of the newly-settled frontier planets.
- *Slaine* – From the fabled land of Tir Nan Og, in the legendary golden age of myth and magic, comes the warrior Slaine Mac-Roth.
- *Bix Barton* – A quest for the irrational in modern day England begins to resemble a Monty Python version of The X-Files.
- *Rogue Trooper* – The ultimate super-soldier on an odyssey of revenge.

In each case, the company hired the characters' comics creators to write the bibles (handbooks) for the projects. For instance, Pat Mills has written the *Slaine* guide and Pete Milligan the one for his *Bix Barton* character.

FFTV said that there has been a great deal of interest in the projects and is confident that some will soon move into development.

FFTV is under the auspices of Egmont Imagination, Norway, with film executive Ileen Maisel and producer/director Harley Cokeliss acting as consultants.

Maisel is a former head of Paramount Pictures (UK) while Cokeliss's credits include the two-hour pilot for the highly-successful *Hercules TV* series.

Agent Duncan Heath, chairman of ICM (Europe) provides representation while Egmont Fleetway managing editor Steve McManus acts as editorial liaison between the parties.

The other projects that helped launch the company are *Durham Red*, *Sinister Dexter*, *Outlaw*, *Sam Slade*, *Bad Company*, *Ace Trucking Co.* and *Harry on the High Rock*.

Steve McManus added that another 2000AD series, the *X-Files*-like *Black Light*, was stirring interest in Germany.

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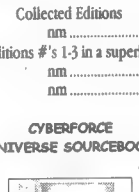

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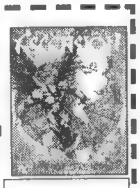
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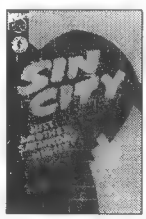

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And finally... "You be the Judge" update

Thank you, thank you, thank you... to all of those people who entered our competition .

As most of you will know by now the Comic Biz competition "You be the judge", where we asked you find the dealer who copied, amongst other things, almost the entire wording of our "Wants List" page in our catalogue, closed 21 November 1997. We were astounded by the number of entries we received, with a good number telling us what they would like to do to the offending dealer. Because this matter is now subject an extremely serious legal action, we have been advised by our lawyers, until the outcome, to contact the winners of the competition personally rather than print the result in Comics International. We hope, subject to the outcome of the legal proceedings, to print the answer to the competition, together with the winners names, at a later date, In the meantime, thanks again for your tremendous input and support regarding this very serious matter and to quote the words of one entrant; " Comic Biz is the best mail-order service I've ever dealt with... ...There is only one Comic Biz, as hard as the others try, they'll never be able to copy your excellent service, friendliness, range of product, great prices and discounts...."

...nuff said... for now!

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NETWORKS

A round-up of comics news and gossip posted on the Internet. Compiled by Michael Doran, Phil Hall and Richard J Johnston

SEEN ON THE NET

Cutting to the Quick

JOHN OSTRANDER has informed Newsarama that he will be taking over the writing along with Joe Edkin of Marvel's **Quicksilver**, as of issue #7: *The plan is to climax the Wundagore storyline by the double-sized 12th issue that will cross over into the **Heroes For Hire '98** Annual,* said Ostrander. *We **are** planning something big in all this. Expect more super-speed action as we look to define what makes Quicksilver different from any other speedster.*

Edkin gave more details, in a post on Usenet, about his and Ostrander's take on the character: *One of the key goals John and I have is to explore who Quicksilver is and why he is a hero. We have no intention of forgetting his past. In fact, we want to deal with where his quick temper and arrogance came from, building on everything that has gone before, including Peter David and Tom Peyer's work.*

When asked to comment on his sudden departure from the title, current **Quicksilver** writer Tom Peyer responded: *I'm very glad to hear John will be writing **Quicksilver**. He's great. I wish everyone connected to it all the luck in the world. And I'm not looking to replace the book on my schedule... it's full, even without **Quicksilver**.* (MD)

Hell of a Shock

*JUST what the heck is going on with Jim Lee's **Hellshock**?* recently asked netters John Bohle and Ed Douglas.

Writer-artist Lee was quick to respond: *I made drastic changes to the storyline which caused an enormous delay on the writing end. When I did the **Hellshock** mini-series a couple years ago, I made the mistake of rushing things. I'm trying hard to overcome my obsessive/compulsive nature, believe me. Issue # 3 has been a nightmare to write. I hope to maintain a regular schedule once issue # 3 has been released. Empty words for now, but I hope I can prove it. I'll be able to tell you the exact ship date of #3 within the next two weeks.* (MD)

The truth about the elf

STEVE Gerber was asked to explain the real story behind the elf subplot he introduced in his 1970s run on **The Defenders**.

Gerber said: *Here's the truth about the elf: When I left **The Defenders**, I had no idea where that subplot was going. The reason for the character's first appearance was a request from Sal Buscema that I give him something, anything, to draw, other than snake suits (we were three issues into the Sons of the Serpent story at that point). So the elf was born as a favour to Sal.*

*Eventually, I'm sure I would have figured out who he was and what he was doing. I used to drop strange little teasers like that into my stories on a regular basis, just to keep myself on my toes. I had always said, though, that having the elf run over by a truck would be the second-best ending to that sub-plot, since I didn't know what the best one was. The elf's nephew showed up in **Spider-Man Team-Up #5**, the Spidey/Howard the Duck story, apparently to avenge his uncle's death and complete the mission... But the nature of the mission still wasn't revealed.* (MD)

GETTING CONNECTED

Christmas free-time

Christmas 1997 is set to be a milestone in British Internet use, as modems and Internet connections are being snapped up as Christmas presents. And since everyone will be logging on at once, or at least fighting with the computer until it does what you want it to, a lot of companies are gearing up for the extra demand.

Many computers are now fitted with internal modems, so all that's needed to get on the Internet is a telephone extension, the right software and an account with an Internet server. A number of companies are therefore giving away *free trial* software, with a limited number of free hours use through their services. This is an ideal time for Internet newbies to send off for as much trial software as possible, enabling them to last well into the new year with only the telephone bills to pay.

Online servers including BTInternet, AOL and Compuserve offer a limited access to the Internet, while other servers such as Demon and Pipex will offer direct access. Christmas also provides a good opportunity to test all the systems to find the most suitable one.

Remember, the Internet can be addictive and even though you aren't paying account fees, phone bills do add up. The best thing for all newbies to do is spend some time actually reading the FAQs, and discovering the quickest and most efficient ways of finding what you want. This will mean that you spend less time wasting your money and more time utilising this unique medium.

And if you find yourself connected up, celebrating New Year's Eve in cyberspace, that really is the time to stop. *Rich Johnston*

Top Cow gets leaner

TOP Cow's **Arcanum** will cease in February with #8: *Low sales did the book in,* explained series creator Brandon Peterson in a post to fans on AOL. *And in this bad market, no one can afford a low selling book. Top Cow has set a bottom point at which a book will be cancelled, and recently **Cyberforce** and **Weapon Zero** went below that mark. It was a bit of a surprise to everyone here with the good numbers from the first few issues, but **Arcanum** kept bleeding numbers with every new issue until it slipped below the mark.*

Peterson went on to explain the circumstances surrounding the cancellation: *Top Cow isn't really the villain in this, as there were no villains. Several different things contributed to Arcanum's inability to perform as needed, ranging from the lousy market to my indecision about what exact direction to take with the book. If people need a reason, than blame me. It was my name all over the book. Arcanum was an admirable attempt, but it didn't succeed.*

Peterson plans to juggle some upcoming story elements to bring the book to a satisfying conclusion.

There are also rumours that another low-selling Top Cow title, **Nine Volt**, will be joining **Arcanum** in comicbook limbo, but so far this has not been confirmed by Image. (MD)

The Storyteller story

HAVE you ever wondered what happened to issue #10 of **Barry Windsor-Smith's Storyteller**?

Asked on the Net recently for some comments regarding the rumoured cancellation of this title, the current status of issue #10, and whether the book has any future, Smith's representative, Alex Bialy, replied: *Firstly, **Storyteller** has not been cancelled. Barry put its publication on hiatus when it became increasingly apparent that Dark Horse Comics had failed to live up to its promises to aggressively promote it in the direct market and especially in the outer markets that the book was created to appeal to.*

*After expending almost all their promotion efforts on the first issue strictly in the direct market, and against Barry's emphatic advice not to do so, Dark Horse effectively stopped promoting it at all, aside from an occasional in-house ad and an ever-diminishing presence in **Previews**, again, all strictly within the limitations of the direct comic-book market.*

Biali continued: *The result was, that while **Storyteller** was a critical success with a very enthusiastic core audience who supported it despite its lack of a high profile, it continuously decreased in sales numbers and lost increasing amounts of money.*

It no longer made sense for the Windsor-Smith Studio to continue investing incredible effort into producing a very high quality, breakthrough book without the support from the publisher needed to make it at least a break-even proposition until it had the opportunity to gain recognition in the wider markets.

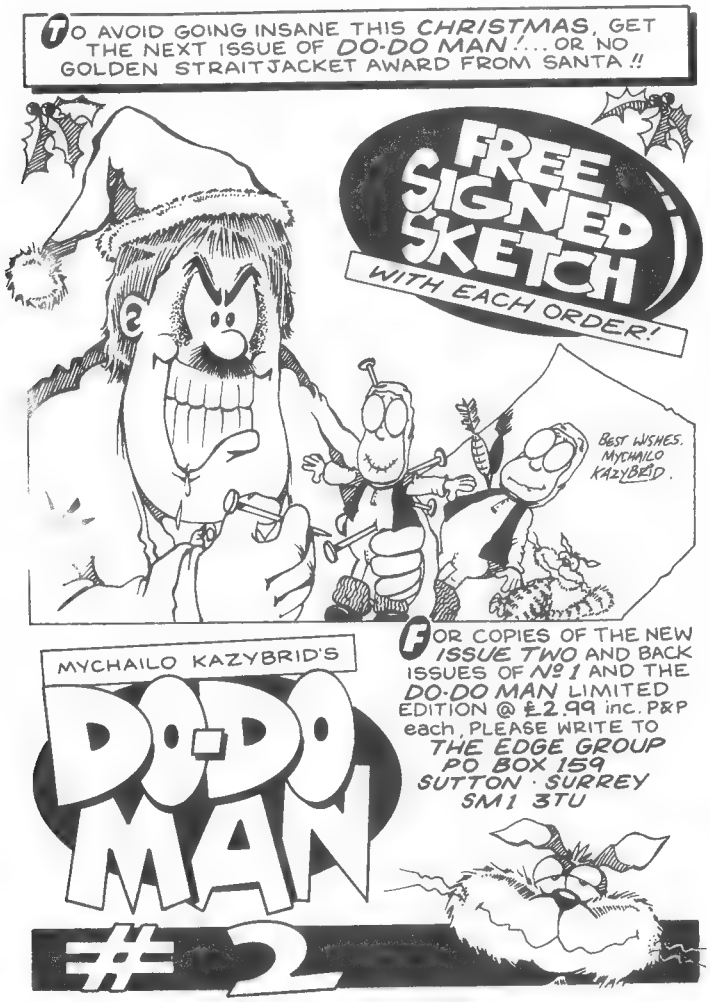
*As the best resolution available under our initial agreement with Dark Horse Comics to publish the first 12 issues of what was always intended to be a series continuing far beyond those first 12, Barry will now be publishing **Storyteller** #10-12 in June, July and August of 1998 through DHC to fulfil his obligation with them, then resume publishing somewhere else as soon as possible. Issue # 10 has already been sent to DHC, and #11 and #12 are in progress.*

*While the content of issues #10-12 will contain some continuations of the stories it has featured in the first nine issues, it will also be exploring, in editorial and graphic story forms, the circumstances at the publisher and in the comic-book market at large that led to **Storyteller**'s current situation. This candid deconstruction of the forces at work promises to be an unprecedented event in comic-book history. After those issues are published, **Storyteller** will be back, but not at DHC.*

When contacted, Dark Horse declined to comment on the situation, other than confirming that they had received issue #10 with the intention of publishing it in June. (MD)

MST3K... to its friends

ACCLAIM boss Fabian Nicieza told fans on Usenet: *Plans proceed for a science fiction line branded as*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*We've been doing the ritual contract negotiation lambada for the last few months, but we all fully anticipate we'll be a 'go' real soon. It will be a smorgasbord of stuff; TV tie-ins, original stuff, **MST3K** (Mystery Science Theater 3000), some of our own more 'super-hero science fiction' oriented stuff (like **Solar, X-O**). All of it will be in trade paperback format, prices and page counts will vary.*

When Usenet talk turned to possible formats and creators for an **MST3K** comic adaptation, writer Len (**Scare Tactics**) Kaminski offered this optimistic comment: *Considering I loaned Fabian & co. some of the rankest treasures from my vast collection of excruciatingly awful comics months ago as part of a feasibility study for an MST3K book, they damned well oughta let me write at least **one** of 'em... What with Crow T. Robot being one of my primary role models and all.* All of which will no doubt be entirely meaningless to **MST3K** bereft UK citizens. (MD)

Never satisfied...

PETE (PT139@aol.com) asked: *Does anyone out there know exactly when **The Hulk** will get back to the way it was about a year ago? What I mean is when will he be: 1) Not so dark? 2) Back with Betty?*

Hulk writer Peter David (padguy@aol.com) replied: *You mean back to the point in time when fans were complaining to me that the Hulk wasn't dark enough and wasn't interesting if he and Betty were happy together?*

Not to be confused with the earlier time when fans wanted me to get rid of the Pantheon, which is not to be confused with the later time when fans wanted to know when I was bringing back the Pantheon because they missed them.

In answer to your question: Two issues from now. That's **Hulk** #363 for the rest of us. (RJJ)

NEOLOGISMS

Terms with which you may be unfamiliar.

Browser — The software application used to access (browse through) the material on the World Wide Web.

Compuserve, AOL, Win-uk.net, Virgin.net — Examples of companies that provide limited and unlimited access to parts of the Internet.

Compuserve provides a CB (Citizen's Band) facility. This has access to either PG rated forums or adult forums but it must be noted you can spend a lot of time online and you will pay for access as well as local call rates.

WWW — The World Wide Web. Pages of interactive text and graphics letting you watch videos, play games, listen to music, or get a specific piece of information at any time.

Cyberspace — The apparently limitless, invisible, electronic environment, created by computers, software and networks, of the Internet.

E-mail — Short for electronic mail, mail sent from one address (something@somewhere. else) to another across the Internet.

FAQ — Acronym for "Frequently Asked Question". There are special sites with all the FAQs for new users.

Flame — In Newsgroups, a flame is a strongly-worded remark, insult or admonishment. These are normally directed at new Internet users who don't use FAQ files or people who make stupid comments.

FTP — File Transfer Protocol. A specialised way of moving a file from one place to another on the Internet.

Home Page — The first screen of information you receive from a Web site. Usually a table of contents or a guide with sign posts to places of interest.

Log in — Logging in is the process of giving a name, password and/or other details to enter a specific area on the Internet.

Net — Abbreviation for "Internet". Lots of computers across the world joined together by satellite, by phone lines and cables. Anyone can join.

Netiquette — Guidelines are drawn up monitoring acceptable behaviour and putting a stop to unruly newcomers. Grasping netiquette can frustrate new users, but every guideline exists for a good reason and the newuser groups on Usenet explain it all.

Newsgroup — Posts are collected under different subject headers. New groups are always being created, from comics to science fiction, fantasy and media.

Smileys :-) 8-) ;-) <g> <G> — rarely seen in print, these are to show that what you've just written was meant as a joke! There are many types of smileys.

Snail-Mail — This is normal mail, the sort that your postman brings in the morning.

URL — Uniform Resource Locator. Webspeak for "address". You should always save the URL's of your favourite websites.

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- ◆Batman & Detective comics from 50's - 70's
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- ◆Captain America #100 - 150
- ◆Cry For Dawn / Dawn #1
- ◆Daredevil #1 - 100
- ◆Darkness #1 - 8
- ◆Fantastic Four #1 - 150
- ◆Grendel - Comico Main Run
- ◆Groo / Mighty Magnor - any
- ◆Hellboy
- ◆Disney's / Gladstone

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- ◆Forever Poeple
- ◆Kamandi
- ◆Mr. Miracle
- ◆New Gods

- ◆J.I.M / Thor #83 - 170
- ◆JLA (current) #1 - 10
- ◆Kabuki - any
- ◆Phantom (Charlton)
- ◆Spawn #1 - 60
- ◆Spawn spin off titles
- ◆Starman #1 - 30
- ◆Star Wars (Marvel US) - any
- ◆Usagi Yojimbo - any
- ◆Witchblade - any
- ◆Uncanny X-Men #1- 200

COMMENT

Comment is a forum to enable fans and professionals alike to express their personal points of view on aspects of the comics industry. As such, the following opinions do not necessarily reflect those of this publication, but space will be given in subsequent issues to well-reasoned opposing views. Submissions are edited only for grammar, clarity and brevity.

No profit in being a prophet

Comment by Skinny Melink, retailer, London SE13

ABOUT a year ago, I wrote in (*Comment*, **CI** #73) about how greedy publishers were jeopardising the entire industry via a glut of over-priced, gimmicky and variant covers.

I warned that things would probably get worse before they got better, and have since been proved a prophet of Delphic proportions, as Marvel has gone bankrupt, and comic shops are disappearing faster than New Labour's principles.

But has anyone learned a damned thing from any of this?

As I write, Awesome's forthcoming **Youngblood** revival offers eight variants for the first issue, while Top Cow's **Darkness** #11 is currently available with 11 different covers.

This is pure greed, and an insult to comic buyers everywhere. These publishers care about nothing other than milking every last penny out of the gullible comic completist, who won't be able to live without buying all the variants.

Let's try some simple maths on the two comics: discounting one issue of **Darkness** which will have a deliberately low print run (and will probably cost the punter an arm or a leg, or £25.00 or so), this means that the comic fan who wants all the other 17 variants will have to fork out approximately £31.50 or $45. All for only two different comics.

Think about that for a moment: the publishers are getting you the fan to buy the same product over and over again! Would you buy 10 copies of the same video or CD because they have different covers? Of course not! And why should you? To put it bluntly, you're a sucker if you do, and you're playing right into the hands of the greedy businessmen that are running – and ruining – the comics industry.

And don't think for a moment that these issues will increase in value and land you a nice profit. Believe me, aside from the low-print issue of **Darkness**, they won't go up very much at all. The sales figures on **Youngblood** of course aren't available, but **Darkness** #11 shipped over 340,000 copies, which hardly makes it rare!

Remember **X-Men** #1 with its five different covers? That comic actually now sells at far *below* its original retail price. And while the low-print **Darkness** variant will command a high price simply due to its scarcity, it's doubtful that the price will hold over any length of time, and dealers and collectors will inevitably end up selling it at a loss.

But no matter, no one will listen to what I'm saying. The publishers will continue to squeeze the punters dry, and the punters will continue to play right into their hands.

In this industry, it seems, you get what you deserve.

Magic Marvel moments

Comment by Rob Kirby, Hitchen, Hertfordshire

IN PRAISING Marvel UK (*Comment*, **CI** #86), my intention was to concentrate on its 25th birthday, rather than to criticise its shortcomings. Obviously Marvel UK has made mistakes over the years, as has Fleetway, Titan, and almost every other UK and US publisher.

In many ways it is the accountancy mentality of certain management teams that has dogged Marvel UK the most, scuppering most attempts to produce a wholly UK alternative to **2000AD**.

Sadly, with the parent company's current financial problems, I doubt that this will happen anytime soon, and now

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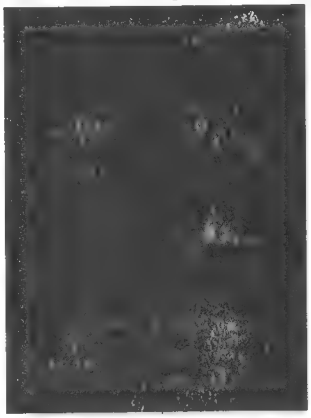

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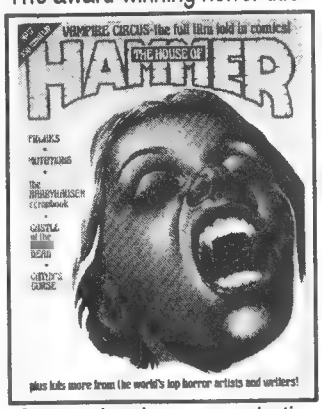
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#4 (First Marvel issue: Hulk tv feature, Tolkien, Excaliber, War of Worlds, *no strips*) **5.00**
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Repackaged by Quality Communications as a full colour 32 page comicbook for US publishers Eclipse, **Miracleman** reprinted the award-winning *Marvelman* **Warrior** work of Alan Moore, Garry Leach and Alan Davis for American comic fans.

#1 (US edtn; Moore, Leach & Davis)
#1 (UK edtn; Moore, Leach & Davis) **£1.50**

PRESSBUTTON

In addition to **Brian Bolland's Black Book** and the two-issue **John Bolton's Halls of Horror** (now out of print), Quality also packaged for Eclipse the **Pressbutton** 6-issue full-colour mini-series, featuring the work of Pedro Henry, Steve Dillon, Brian Bolland, Alan Davis, Mick Austin and Cam Kennedy.

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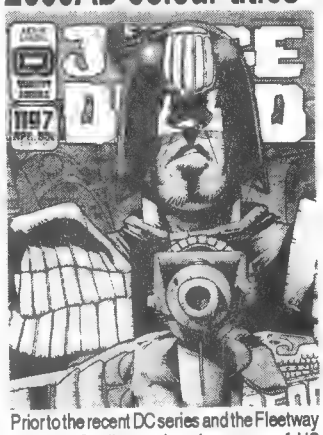
2000AD colour titles



Prior to the recent DC series and the Fleetway reprints, Quality produced a range of US sized colour comics in the mid-1980s including the **2000AD** work of Wagner, Grant, Mills, Bolland, Dillon, Gibbons, Moore, Davis, O'Neill, Talbot, McMahon and Gibson. The following are still available:

Judge Dredd v1 #35 ..... **2.00**
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Rogue Trooper #1-5 (Gibbons) **£1.00**
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Any previously published prices are void upon publication of this advertisement. All books shipped within 7 days of clearance of cheques.

that Marvel UK has bowed out of the weekly teenage market, **2000AD** is getting a clear run. As it was in the '70s, the competition would do both companies good.

I do appreciate Milton Finesilver's honest assessment of Marvel's UK legacy (*Comment*, **CI** #87), although I obviously disagree with certain of his assertions. Like Stephen Cook (on the next page), I too owe a debt to Marvel UK for gathering me into the Marvel fold back in 1976. It provided me with a wonderful way of cheaply digesting part of Marvel's enormously sprawling back catalogue, and later, as a collector, I eventually managed to build up an almost complete run of every major Marvel title.

Initially out of curiosity, I began to catalogue Marvel UK's output, trying to discover what issues had been missed out, edited, or otherwise tampered with. After spending several years compiling this massive database, it seemed selfish to stash it all away once it had enabled me to compile my American wants list, which was my original aim.

Foolishly, I decided to format it into book form, and it's this seven year slog that Dez Skinn was referring to in a reply (*Letters*, **CI** #86). I hope to self-publish in 1998.

I have no problems with reprints, providing they are complete. I think it's a shame to tamper with the work, when the quality of reprints has often surpassed that of the original editions.

All of which brings me to Milton Finesilver's point about value for money. All 24 issues of the full colour 100 page four-story **The Complete Spider-Man** sold at £1.75 each, which compared very favourably with the total cost of the equivalent American issues. The same holds true for its succeeding UK titles, **The Exploits of Spider-Man,** and it's replacement, the current **The Astonishing Spider-Man**. Given the recent price increases across the whole magazine sector (including **2000AD**), I don't think Finesilver's accusations of a price spiral/aggressive pricing policy are therefore valid.

What makes Marvel UK's output so special for me isn't just the UK originated material, but the discovery of **Planet of the Apes** pages published in Britain before pages were cut out or condensed for the American magazines, as well as the wild variety of covers and posters by American and British talents... oh, and the stories themselves.

I'd just like the fans and collectors to realise that this material exists, and that it's a part of UK comics' history that should be unashamedly recorded. Like it or not, speculation exists, and some dealers will always inflate prices beyond sensible limits, but that certainly isn't something I wish to encourage, and have no intention to ever compile any form of price guide for UK comics.

In chronicling Marvel UK, I'm simply trying to add my own work to that previously published by George Olshevsky, Mike Tiefenbacher, and all those index obsessives mapping the ever-expanding history of a medium we (hopefully) all still love.

In defence of John Byrne

Comment by Steve Morrell, Sheffield, Yorkshire

IN RESPONSE to Fabio P. Barbieri's attack on John Byrne (*Letters*, **CI** #87): If Byrne were to go back to Marvel, and back to the X-books, then I would have those titles put back on my standing order list faster than a speeding bullet! Sure, some parts of Genesis were poor, but that was largely down to the incompetent who put in the word and thought balloons.

I have dropped all my remaining Marvel mutant titles as of **X-Men** #70, **Excalibur** #115, and **Uncanny X-Men** #350. I have no intention of picking up these titles again until John Byrne, Chris Claremont, or Peter David are back at the helm, or until Alan Davis takes charge of a mutant title.

James Robinson, one of my favourite writers, is currently on **Cable**, but I dropped the book soon after the Blaque Smith character was introduced, and can't be bothered to pick it up again.

I read John Byrne's **Wonder Woman** during the run up to Genesis, and I have since added it to my regular list, along with **Sovereign 7,** with the debut of Power Girl into the book. I enjoy the writing on both titles, which I suppose is all that counts.

The ongoing fight about the direction of comics is really starting to piss me off. I'm sure that the same people who moan about superheroes would be just as likely to gloat about the superiority of Shakespeare, Dickens and the Bronte sisters, to Jeffrey Archer, PD James and Barbara Cartland, when there is room for all of them. Or Mike Leigh vs Quentin Tarantino, or classical music vs jazz.

Myself, I would gladly pay to see Mark Waid's and Jerry Ordway's **The Adventures of Captain Marvel**, or Grant Morrison's **Martian Manhunter**, or John Byrne's **Captain Atom**, Kurt Busiek's **Firestorm**, or even Steven Morrell's **Sentinels of Justice**!

PUBLISHER INDEX

IN ANSWER to continual requests for details concerning comics [illegible] the CI Publisher's Index covers all major newsstand and direct sale mainstream comics publishers. For information about small press and non-newsstand UK titles, readers are referred to the Announcements section of our classified listings.

US PUBLISHERS

While not exhaustive, the following are the major North American comics publishers:

■ **AARDVARK-VANAHEIM**, PO Box 1674 Station C, Kitchner, Ontario N2G 4R2 Canada (Cerebus)

■ **AC COMICS**, PO Box 1216, Longwood, Florida 32752 (adventure & western titles)

■ **ACCLAIM COMICS**, 275 7th Ave, 14th Floor, New York, NY 10(001) (adventure & licensed) (001) 212 366 4900

■ **ANTARCTIC PRESS**, 7272 Wurzbach Suite #204, San Antonio, Texas 78240 (manga) fax: (001) 210 614 5029

■ **ARCHIE COMIC PUBLICATIONS**, 325 Fayette Ave., Mamaroneck, NY 10543 (humour titles) (001) 914 381 5155

■ **AWESOME ENTERTAINMENT**, 9744 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 402, Beverly Hills, Los Angeles, Ca 90212 (adventure titles)

■ **BONGO ENTERTAINMENT**, 1999 Ave of the Stars, Los Angeles, Ca 90607 (Simpsons - related humour) (001) 310 788 1367

■ **CALIBER PRESS**, 225 N. Sheldon Road, Plymouth, Mi 48170 (b&w adventure titles) (001) 1-888-22-COMIC

■ **CHAOS COMICS**, 7645 E. Evans Road, Suite #6, Scottsdale, Az 85260 (fantasy/ horror comics)

■ **CRUSADE COMICS**, 65-27 Alderton St., Rego Park, NY 11374 (fantasy/adventure titles)

■ **DARK HORSE COMICS**, 10956 S. E. Main St., Milwaukie, Or 97222 (adventure, licensed & manga titles) (001) 503 652 8815

■ **DC COMICS**, 1700 Broadway, New York, NY 1(001)9 (adventure, humour, Vertigo & Paradox Press imprints) (001) 212 636 5400

■ **DISNEY COMICS**, 500 S Buena Vista St, Burbank, California 91521 (humour titles) (001) 818 507 5739

■ **DRAWN & QUARTERLY**, 5550 Jeanne Mance St #16, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H2V 4K6 (b&w biog)

■ **FANTACO ENTERTAINMENTS**, 21 Central Ave, Albany, NY 12210 (horror titles)

■ **FANTAGRAPHIC BOOKS**, 7563 Lake City Way NE, Seattle, Wa 98115 (b&w adventure, biog & Eros adult titles) (001) 206 524 1967

■ **GLADSTONE PUBLISHING**, Box 2079, Prescott, Arizona 86302 (humour, licensed) (001) 602 776 1300

■ **HARRIS COMICS**, 1115 Broadway, 8th Floor, New York, NY 1(001)0 (Vampirella, fantasy/horror titles) (001) 212 807 7100

■ **HARVEY COMICS ENTERTAINMENTS**, 100 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica, Ca 91401 (humour titles) (001) 310 451 3377

■ **HEAVY METAL**, 100 Merrick Road, Suite 400 East, The Rockville Cnt, NY 11570 (adult fantasy mag & spin-offs) (001) 516 594 2130

■ **IMAGE COMICS**, 2400 E Katella Ave, Suite 1065, Anaheim, Ca 92806 (adventure titles) (001) 714 8718802

■ **KITCHEN SINK**, 221 Pine St, Florence, Ma 01062 (adventure) (001) 413 584 7388

■ **MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP**, 387 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 1(001)6 (adventure, humour and licensed titles) (001) 212 696 0808

■ **NBM PUBLICATIONS**, 185 Madison Ave, Suite 1502, New York, NY 1(001)6 (adult fantasy graphic novels & magazines)

■ **REBEL STUDIOS**, 4716 Judy Court, Sacramento, Ca 95841. (adventure b&w titles) (001) 916 443 7629

■ **RIP OFF PRESS**, PO Box 4686, Auburn, Ca 95604 (underground comix)

■ **SIRIUS ENTERTAINMENT**, PO Box 128, Stanhope, NJ 07874 (adult fantasy)

■ **SLAVE LABOR GRAPHICS**, 979 S. Bascom Ave, San Jose, Ca 95128 (fantasy b&w) (001) 408 279 0451

■ **TOPPS COMICS**, 254 36th St., Brooklyn, NY 11232 (adventure) (001) 212 514 8190

■ **VEROTIK**, PO Box 64859, Los Angeles, Ca 90064 (Glenn Danzig's adult fantasies)

■ **VIZ COMICS**, PO Box 77010, San Francisco, Ca 94107 (translated manga titles)

■ **WaRP GRAPHICS**, 43 Haight Ave, Poughkeepsie, NY 12603 (Elfquest and spin-offs) (001) 914 473 9277

UK PUBLISHERS

The following are the major UK newsstand comics and graphic novel publishers (when phoning from outside of the UK, drop the first 0 and replace with UK country code):

■ **DC THOMSON**, Albert Square, Dundee DD1 9QJ (humour, adventure & girls' titles)

■ **EGMONT FLEETWAY EDITIONS**, 25-31 Tavistock Place, London WC1H 9SU (adventure, humour, licensed, Disney, Dredd) 0171 344 6400

■ **HAMLYN BOOKS**, Michelin House, 81 Fulham Rd, London SW3 (2000AD graphic novels) 0171 581 9393

■ **JOHN BROWN PUBLISHING**, The Boathouse, Crabtree Lane, Fulham, London SW6 (**Viz**) 0171 381 6007

■ **KNOCKABOUT COMICS**, 10 Acklam Rd, London W10 5QZ (humour & underground comix, graphic novels) 0181 969 2945

■ **MARVEL COMICS (UK)**, Panini House, Coach & Horses Passage, The Pantiles, Tunbridge Wells, Kent KT2 5UJ (humour, adventure, licensed) 01892 500 100

■ **THE REDAN COMPANY**, Appleton House, 139 King Street, London W6 9JG (pre-school humour titles) 0181 563 1563

■ **SAVOY BOOKS**, 279 Deansgate, Manchester M3 4EW (adult) 0161 833 2664

■ **TITAN BOOKS/TITAN MAGAZINES**, 42 Dolben St, London SE1 OUP (licensed graphic novels, magazines & comics) 0171 620 0200

ORGANISATIONS

UK-based comics-related societies and organisations:

■ **THE CARTOON ART TRUST**, 40 New House, 67-68 Hatton Garden, London EC1N 8JY (reg charity, exhibition gallery & library, lectures, Friday evening cartoon classes, free newsletter, send sae) 0171 405 4717

■ **THE COMICS CREATORS GUILD**, c/o 171 Oldfield Grove, London SE16 2NE (comics organisation; £30 subs: monthly newsletter & quarterly **Comics Forum** magazine)

■ **THE SCOTTISH CARTOONISTS CLUB**, c/o J & T Graphics, 61 Parnie St., Glasgow

COMICS ECONOMICS

Top 100 US comicbook sales for December 1997

Rank	Prior	Title & Price (where other than $1.95 or $1.99)	Publisher
1	(9)	**The Darkness #11 ($2.50)**	Image
2	(N)	**Avengers #1 ($2.99)**	Marvel
3	(N)	**Iron Man #1 ($2.99)**	Marvel
4	(1)	**Fantastic Four #2**	Marvel
5	(3)	**Uncanny X-Men #352**	Marvel
6	(5)	**X-Men #72**	Marvel
7	(4)	**Spawn #69**	Image
8	(2)	**Captain America #2 ($1.99)**	Marvel
9	(6)	**Wolverine #121**	Marvel
10	(7)	**JLA #15**	DC
11	(10)	**Curse of Spawn 16**	Image
12	(=)	**Generation X #35**	Marvel
13	(11)	**JLA: Year One #2**	DC
14	(13)	**JLA: Paradise Lost #2**	DC
15	(16)	**Wolverine: Days of Future Past #3 ($2.50)**	Marvel
16	(N)	**Superman Red Superman Blue** Collectors edition ($4.95)	DC
17	(=)	**X-Man #35**	Marvel
18	(N)	**X-Men/WildCATs Dark Age** (4.50)	Marv
19	(N)	**Generation X/Gen^{13}** ($3.99)	Marvel
20	(18)	**X-Force #74**	Marvel
21	(19)	**X-Factor #142**	Marvel
22	(14)	**Cable #51**	Marvel
23	(20)	**The Incredible Hulk #461**	Marvel
24	(22)	**Divine Right #4 ($2.50)**	Image
25	(re)	**Tales of Witchblade #4 ($2.95)**	Image
26	(24)	**Amazing Spider-Man #431**	Marvel
27	(re)	**Gen^{13} #25 ($3.50)**	Image
28	(32)	**Superman #132**	DC
29	(37)	**Adventures of Superman #555**	DC
30	(26)	**Kiss Psycho Circus #6**	Image
31	(23)	**Uncle Sam #2 ($4.95)**	DC/Vertigo
32	(re)	**Creech #2**	Image
33	(N)	**X-Man '97 ($2.99)**	Marvel
34	(25)	**Excalibur #117**	Marvel
35	(27)	**Spider-Man #88**	Marvel
36	(30)	**Spectacular Spider-Man #254**	Marvel
37	(28)	**Superman: Man of Steel #76**	DC
38	(N)	**New Year's Evil: Gog**	DC
39	(33)	**Batman #551**	DC
40	(31)	**Alpha Flight #7**	Marvel
41	(38)	**Sensational Spider-Man #24**	Marvel
42	(39)	**Deadpool #13**	Marvel
43	(40)	**Unlimited Access #3 ($1.99)**	Marvel
44	(N)	**New Year's Evil: Prometheus**	DC
45	(36)	**Bishop: XSE #2 ($2.50)**	Marvel
46	(N)	**Legends of the DC Universe #1**	DC
47	(42)	**Detective Comics #718**	DC
48	(46)	**Green Lantern #95 ($1.75)**	DC
49	(45)	**Thunderbolts #11**	Marvel
50	(N)	**Longshot ($3.99)**	Marvel
51	(N)	**S/Wars: Crimson Empire 1** (2.95)	DHrse
52	(47)	**Preacher #34 ($2.50)**	DC/Vertigo
53	(52)	**Nightwing #17**	DC
54	(48)	**Batman/Predator III #4**	DC
55	(53)	**The Flash #134**	DC
56	(43)	**The Tenth #4 ($2.50)**	Image
57	(N)	**Xena: Dragon's Teeth 1** (2.95)	Topps
58	(N)	**Spawn Movie Adaptation** (4.95)	Image
59	(41)	**Xena Warrior Princess 2** (2.95)	Topps
60	(55)	**Batman: Legends/Dk Knight 103**	DC
61	(49)	**Voodoo #2 ($2.50)**	Image
62	(56)	**Supergirl #18**	DC
63	(N)	**New Year's Evil: Scarecrow**	DC
64	(N)	**New Year's Evil: Darkseid**	DC
65	(50)	**Kitty Pryde: Agent of S.H.I.E.L.D. #3 ($2.50)**	Marvel
66	(re)	**Pitt #16 ($2.50)**	Full Bleed
67	(N)	**Conspiracy #1 ($2.99)**	Marvel
68	(59)	**Batman: Shadow of the Bat #71**	DC
69	(51)	**Gen^{13} Bootleg #14 ($2.50)**	Image
70	(60)	**The X-Files #37 ($2.95)**	Topps
71	(64)	**Wonder Woman #130**	DC
72	(N)	**New Year's Evil: Mr Mxyzptlk**	DC
73	(N)	**Preacher Special: Cassidy** (5.95)	DC/V
74	(70)	**Robin #50**	DC
75	(29)	**WildCORE #2 ($2.50)**	Image
76	(N)	**New Year's Evil: The Rogues**	DC
77	(re)	**Spider-Man Unlimited 19** (2.99)	Marvel
78	(65)	**Catwoman #54**	DC
79	(67)	**Conspiracy #2 ($2.99)**	Marvel
80	(57)	**Star Wars: Last Command #2**	DkHorse
81	(N)	**Birds of Prey: Batgirl ($2.95)**	DC
82	(67)	**Ka-Zar #10**	Marvel
83	(N)	**New Year's Evil: Nemesis**	DC
84	(N)	**New Year's Evil: Body Doubles**	DC
85	(58)	**Gen^{13} Interactive #3 ($2.50)**	Image
86	(N)	**Chase #1 ($2.50)**	DC
87	(68)	**Maverick #6**	Marvel
88	(re)	**Gen^{13} #25 Voyager Pack ($4.50)**	Image
89	(N)	**Werewolf By Night #1 ($2.99)**	Marvel
90	(N)	**Shadows & Light #1**	Marvel
91	(66)	**Quicksilver #4**	Marvel
92	(71)	**Heroes For Hire #8**	Marvel
93	(82)	**Starman #39 ($2.25)**	DC
94	(69)	**Neil Gaiman & Charles Vess: Stardust #3 ($5.95)**	DC/Vertigo
95	(78)	**Mage: Hero Defined #6 ($2.50)**	Image
96	(75)	**Elektra #15**	Marvel
97	(N)	**Supergirl/Prism Double Shot #1**	DC
98	(84)	**Teen Titans #17**	DC
99	(N)	**Superman: Distant Fires ($5.95)**	DC
100	(re)	**Arcanum #7 ($2.50)**	Image

(N)=New entry (re)=re-entry or infrequent (=)non-mover from previous month

Darkness rules x 11!

This book's lowest position since the chart began!

Collector's editions still score, with standard version struggling at 119th

Can Arcudi and Frank stem the slide?

DC pulls it off again, with its latest extravaganza

Longshot one-shot proves a real hotshot

Heroes Return still riding high

Stripping for success

Excellent performance considering the cover price.

Another poor starting *Strange Tales* title

Disappointing debut for Marvel's high-quality b&w project

Next 50 titles: December 1997

(Titles generally selling below 25,000)

101	(83)	Silver Surfer #136	Marvel
102	(76)	Satana #2 ($2.99)	Marvel
103	(N)	Fighting American: Rules of the Game #1 ($2.50)	Awesome
104	(N)	Robin/Argent Double Shot	DC
105	(61)	Moon Knight #2 ($2.50)	Marvel
106	(99)	What If? #105	Marvel
107	(N)	Star Wars: X-Wing Squadron - Making of Baron Fel 1 (2.95)	Dk Horse
108	(81)	X-Files: Ground Zero #2 ($2.95)	Topps
109	(87)	Aquaman #41	DC
110	(90)	Daredevil #372	Marvel
111	(N)	Batgirl Adventures #1 ($2.95)	DC
112	(80)	DV8 #14 ($2.50)	Image
113	(93)	Azrael #37	DC
114	(85)	Marvel Team-Up #6	Marvel
115	(94)	Shi: The Series #5 ($2.95)	Crusade
116	(98)	StormWatch #3 ($2.50)	Image
117	(102)	Hitman #23 ($2.25)	DC
118	(103)	Maxx#35	Image
119	(N)	Superman Red/Superman Blue standard edition ($3.95)	DC
120	(137)	Power of Shazam #35	DC
121	(101)	Journey into Mystery #517	Marvel
122	(92)	Superboy #48	DC
123	(88)	Legion of Super-Heroes #101	DC
124	(N)	Superboy/Risk Double Shot	DC
125	(N)	Legends of the Legion #1 ($2.25)	DC
126	(97)	Shi: East Wind Rain #2 ($3.50)	Crusade
127	(115)	Savage Dragon #44 ($2.50)	Image
128	(108)	Impulse #34	DC
129	(116)	Legionnaires #57 ($2.25)	DC
130	(114)	The Dreaming #21 ($2.50)	DC/Vertigo
131	(N)	Impulse/Atom Double Shot	DC
132	(107)	Conan the Usurper #3 ($2.50)	Marvel
133	(N)	Bad Boy ($4.95)	Oni Press*
134	(N)	Hellboy Xmas Special ($3.95)	DHorse
135	(105)	DV8 vs Black Ops #3 ($2.50)	Image
136	(62)	Vampirella #2 ($2.95)	Harris
137	(106)	The Kents #7 ($2.50)	DC
138	(120)	Books of Magic #45 ($2.50)	DC
139	(104)	Batman Adventures: Lost Years #2	DC
140	(74)	Man-Thing #3 ($2.99)	Marvel
141	(N)	Awesome Holiday Sp (2.50)	Awesome
142	(N)	Secret Origins ($4.95)	DC
143	(N)	Martha Washington Saves the World #1 ($2.95)	Dark Horse
144	(100)	Ash #2 ($2.95)	Event
145	(re)	Kabuki #2 ($2.95)	Image
146	(130)	Resurrection Man #10 ($2.50)	DC
147	(re)	Strangers in Paradise Volume 3 #11 ($2.75)	Abstract
148	(N)	X-Files Season 1: Conduit (4.95)	Topps
149	(124)	Evil Ernie Destroyer #4 (2.95)	Chaos*
150	(re)	Books of Magic Annual 2 (3.95)	DC/V

*Publisher names followed by * indicates the title is not exclusively distributed by Diamond Comics Distributors*

Marvel Comics

The **Heroes Return** titles fell short of a clean sweep this month only because of the marketing coup of the year, **The Darkness** #11.

Despite retaining 39% of the market share, only one Marvel title has risen (**Wolverine: Days of Future Past** #3, up 1 place) and two haven't moved. The rest all dropped, seven titles right out of the Top 100. However, the company does contribute eight new entries, including the two highest – the new, new-look **Avengers** and **Iron Man**.

The main **X-Men** titles have fallen to their lowest positions since this chart began, a slide likely to be halted soon with the return of Chris Claremont to the helm.

Two disappointing performances for Marvel are the revamped **Werewolf By Night** (launching at 89th) and **Shadows & Light** (in at 90th).

A final (quite possibly) mention for **Man-Thing**, which bucked the second issue trend last month by outselling its first issue. This month it is the second highest faller, down a massive 66 places to 140th. Coincidentally, this third issue is the first without a mature readers label.

DC Comics

DC has increased its market share by a whopping 7% and is again challenging Marvel for supremacy. The company is back up to 38%, largely due to the splitting of Superman and the **New Year's Evil** one-shots, all of which charted in the 100.

JLA holds onto its Top 10 spot and looks set to move even further up the chart when the Top Ten settles down after the recent flood of big releases; but having three titles in the Top 15 is a noteworthy achievement for the company.

Vertigo isn't looking bad, either. It has three titles in the Top 100, plus another three in the lower section of the chart.

DC had only four titles drop out of the Top 100, with many of its lesser lights holding their own in the face of a huge amount of new releases with 33 new or re-released books this month, 15 of them from DC!

Image Comics

Top Cow should be congratulated for breaking the stranglehold Marvel and Todd McFarlane have had on the top spot.

But what makes **The Darkness** #11 so special? The 11 variant covers for a start. Despite reversing the assumed backlash against variants, this has the added bonus of the return of Garth Ennis, the comic's co-creator. Reports indicate retailers ordered over 340,000 copies, more than twice that its nearest rival, **Avengers** #1, at second place!

The Darkness has been one of Image's most popular books since it debuted last year and regularly places in the Top Ten. How much of the massive retail order the title manages to hold on to will be seen next month!

While Marc Silvestri's Top Cow titles are enjoying a huge success, Image stablemate Todd McFarlane continues to strike gold in the top half of the chart with all four of his titles in the Top 40: **Spawn** holds on to 7th place, **Curse of Spawn** is down one to 11th, **Kiss: The Psycho Circus** drops four places to 30th and **Creech** #2 is a re-entry at 32nd.

Jim Lee's **Divine Right: The Adventures of Max Faraday** remains solid in the mid-twenties and **Gen^{13}** returned to the charts at a relatively lowly 27th.

Other publishers

Dark Horse loses its #4 slot to Topps this month and its nerw launches do little to bolster its position. The new Martha Washington launches as a disappointing 143rd, even poorer than the 133 slot for the **Hellboy Christmas Special**. The **Battlestar Galactica** revival has bombed at 259th, although Image's **Hong on the Range** fared little better at 201nd.

Top 100 publisher market share

Marvel Comics	39%
DC Comics	38%
Image Comics	17%
Topps Comics	3%
Dark Horse Comics	2%
Full Bleed Studios	1%

Notable first issue performances

WITH seemingly reckless abandon, publishers launch marginal new titles every month on the already overcrowded direct market. A recent report stated that only 25 titles had sales over 70,000 with the 100th placing title at less than 25,000. DC's smash hit, **JLA**, is in the 100,000 range, while Vertigo's leader, **Preacher**, hovers around the 45,000 mark, more than double almost the rest of the Vertigo line. Image's **Spawn** maintains its 140,000+ sales while **Gen^{13}** has lost over 50,000 sales in the last year. Dark Horse's creator-owned leader, **Sin City**, is believed to be a constant 60,000 seller, almost three times the sales of **Madman**, while the rest of the company's titles outside of the **Star Wars** line hover in the 10,000 to 20,000 region. Acclaim titles are all below 10,000 except **X-O Manowar** in the low teens. Even indie favourite **Bone** appears to sell under 25,000, half of its peak a few years ago. However, it should be noted that **Bone**, along with many other independently published comics, is carried by smaller distributors, which can add as much as 20% more to the total sales.

Here is a selection of this month's new contenders:

Avengers #1 (2nd)	Marvel	Shadows & Light #1 (90th)	Marvel
Iron Man #1 (3rd)	Marvel	Fighting American: Rules/Game #1 (103rd)	Awesome
Superman Red Superman Blue (16th)	DC	Pantha #1 (176th)	Harris
New Year's Evil: Gog #1 (38th)	DC	Concrete: Strange Armor 1 (187th)	Dk Horse
Legends of the DC Universe #1 (46th)	DC	Darque Passages #1 (191st)	Acclaim Comics
Longshot (50th)	Marvel	Battlestar Galactica #1 (201st)	Real Comics
Conspiracy #1 (67th)	Marvel	7th System #1 (222nd)	Sirius
Chase #1 (86th)	DC	Hong on the Range #1 (259th)	Image
Werewolf By Night #1 (89th)	Marvel	Redeemers #1 (286th)	Antarctic

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Q AND A

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More Than Money

Alistair Burge, Bath Rd
Atworth, Wiltshire

Q HOW WAS the **More Than Mortal** (Liar Comics) #1 limited cover, which is mentioned as being the rarest of the covers available at present with the comic itself, made available?

Was it a retailer premium?

A *The answer to this one is probably, but we don't know for sure. However, it might be worth mentioning that **More Than Mortal** has become something of a hit and may well be a contender as a "hot independent tip", especially if you consider the comic's recent performance in the sales charts.*

***More Than Mortal** #2 got into the Top 150 comic sales chart (no mean feat for an unknown quantity) with sales in the region of 20,000, and the second printing of #1 placed in the 200s.*

Phil Hall
recovering from Comics Economics

Where is Blast's Martin Spoade?

John Michael,
134 Mackintosh Place
Roath, Cardiff CF2

Q THE final issue of **Blast**, in 1991, featured an unbelievably caustic Anglo-American tale starring "Martin Spoade" by Nick Abadzis and John Buckle. The final panel boldly promised that Martin would return. Do you know if he ever did?

A *Not to the best of our knowledge, but I wouldn't be surprised if Nick Abadzis sets us straight within the next 28 days.* ...Dez

Fleetway history

Barry Partington
Linthorpe, Middlesbrough

Q I MUST admit to being confused by who or what Fleetway is and how long the company has been around.

I thought it started recently, when Maxwell took over (?), but I have some old annuals from the 1970s which also say the name Fleetway on them.

Can you help?

Yes. You're right to be confused. The 1970s annuals you've got were actually published by IPC Magazines, which was a super-company created out of absorbing the original Fleetway, along with Odhams, Amalgamated Press, Hulton and a few more. In fact, at the time IPC was the world's biggest commercial publisher (the award for being the world's biggest publisher, commercial or otherwise, went to the US Government, who produced more paperwork than any commercial publisher, anywhere!).

However, while the comics all then bore the IPC Magazines name in their copyrights, the annuals maintained the Fleetway logo on the cover. But the origin of the name goes back a lot further.

Fleetway, like Fleet Street, took its name from the underground London river which ran beneath Fleetway House, a converted Victorian hotel in Farringdon Street where the company was based, and beneath what became Fleet Street.

It was quite appropriately named too, because it was fleet enough to catch the comics publishers out every four years when it flooded and swamped the sub-basement of Fleetway House.

*Sadly, the sub-basement was where all the original artwork was stored. This wasn't just the then current crop of black and white titles' art, but also the old Hulton full colour **Eagle** art too.*

The beleaguered souls working there had to sort and stack over 500 pages of art being generated every week and maintain the bound volumes. On top of this, every four years, the entire content had to be moved up to the basement, to avoid the flooding Fleet.

During this time, the bound volumes were considered a greater goldmine than the originals, as they were constantly used as reference material when young sub-editors were in search of old stories to reprint to stay within budget for annuals.

So, every four years, the word came down from on high (the unlikely-to-be-flooded fifth floor) to empty the sub-basement. The two filers and compilers, Bas Spratley and Martin Morgan, were always told to prioritise the bound volumes, resulting in Bellamy and Hampson colour originals often turning to mush and being discarded.

However, anecdotes aside, you asked about the company...

*The origins of Fleetway Publications go all the way back to 1888, when the 23 year old Alfred Harmsworth (later Lord Northcliffe) started a small weekly paper called **Answers to Correspondents**. The journal eventually joined with the Amalgamated Press, whose other titles included **Comic Cuts**, **The Wonder**, **The Marvel**, and **Illustrated Chips**, whose popular tramps (Weary Willie and Tired Tim) are said to have inspired South Londoner Charlie Chaplin to create a similar character of his own!*

Nor was Chaplin the only luminary inspired by Amalgamated, as renowned writers such as Joseph Conrad, HG Wells, Conan Doyle, Thomas Hardy, and Enid Blyton all contributed to AP publications. (hard to imagine now though it may be that such authors wrote for comics!)

*The Amalgamated Press was still running strong when, in 1959, it was bought by the Mirror Group, and re-christened Fleetway Publications. Ten years later, Fleetway was absorbed by the International Publishing Corporation (IPC), and in 1977 it launched the highly influential comic **2000AD**, issue two of which introduced Judge Dredd, still one of the few British comic heroes to star in his own Hollywood movie.*

But in the jungle of corporate publishing, more changes were in store. In 1987, the Robert Maxwell Organisation bought out IPC's comic line, and restored the Fleetway name. But after Maxwell's sudden death in 1991, the company was acquired by Egmont, a multi-national media group based in Denmark, which is Europe's largest publisher of juvenilia based on Disney, Hanna-Barbera and Warner. ...Dez

Skanked times 3

Paul Foreskin, Skank Magazine
6 Hoxton Square, London

Q THREE quickies for you: Where the hell is **Hellshock?** In your last issue the listings stated that #8 was coming out, however I've only seen two issues on the shelves. Now, it can't be much of a bestseller that it sells out every bleedin' issue.

What in the name of Stan Lee's rug is going on?

Speaking of Stan's rug, my mate, Nobby Batty, tells me that it's really made out of wood shearings. [Excelsior, perhaps?]

Seriously though, I remember over a decade ago, you told me that during the twilight years of **Warrior**, you were, in fact, creating a **Warrior** Universe which inter-linked every strip in the magazine.

Out of the conversation, I can only recall the name "Trevillion", so can you explain once again what was going on?

A ***Hellshock** writer/artist Jae Lee has been apologising all over again! He admitted (on these very pages) that he lost his way in the first mini-series.*

Now, it seems, he's done it again. He's put a temporary hold on the comic until he can get a strong enough plotline together, as he feels the book was losing its way!

*As for that whole **Warrior** Universe thing, yes, there was more to it. But we'd need a full column, if anybody really cared. Go on, goad me!* ...Dez Skinn

Caniff re-explored

Gary James Bird, London

Q THIS HAS most likely been covered before, but I just want to know a bit more about Milton Caniff. I found a picture of a late model B17G 711th Bomb Squadron of the 447th Bomb Group (based at rattlesden), the aircraft in question (42-97976) shows end of war markings with yellow wing tips and tail, a painting of a woman in red with "A bit o' lace" written underneath is signed by Milton Caniff.

I know the army invited him to create a strip to be distributed to US Military personnel in '42 (which was **Male Call**), but did he actually paint the lady, and what other

patriotic things did he do for the army?

A *Over to any local Caniff experts for a reply (hopefully) in 28 days!*

ANSWER UPDATES
or... New As for old Qs

Dreaming musings

Peter Hogan, London

Q REGARDING Matthew Ellison's query (*Q&A*, **CI** #86) about **The Dreaming** and other **Sandman** spin-offs: the short *nothing* from **Sandman** territory is "off-limits", with the exception of the Endless themselves. Writing duties on **The Dreaming** are now (as of #22) divided pretty much between myself and Caitlin R. Kiernan, and both of us (and our editor, Alisa Kwitney) have frequent discussions with Neil Gaiman (more frequently than he'd like, probably). Neil is actively involved as a consultant, and has input as every stage, from initial concept through to finished artwork.

Next year will see the debut of another, occasional title, **The Sandman Presents**, which will feature stories and characters that fall outside the monthly continuity of **The Dreaming** (where there's a long storyline coming up which will run for about a year). I've already written two stories for this: *Marquee Moon* (a tale of wolves in punk rockers' clothing, set in 1977, with art by Peter Doherty) and *Love Street* (featuring the teenage John Constantine, with art by Michael Zulli). And before anyone accuses DC/Vertigo of exploitation here, it should be pointed out that this title was actually Neil's idea.

It should also be noted that Neil doesn't actually own any of the characters he created for **The Sandman** – but regardless, DC have consistently respected his wishes as an author as to what befalls his creations.

As to the Endless: Destiny predates **The Sandman** (being an old DC character), which is why Alisa Kwitney and others (myself included) have been able to use him. Neil has also kindly allowed me to use another Endless character for a cameo appearance or two (wait and see), and has himself written a tale of Desire for this winter's Vertigo special. Beyond that? Time will tell...

DCT's Arena

Chris Barnett
46 Abbotsfield Court, Glasgow

A IN answer to George Hannah's question (*Q&A*, **CI** #88), the comic he is looking for is DC Thomson's **The Crunch**. Not as early as george thought, it ran 54 issues from January 20th, 1979, to January 25th, 1980.

Arena, set in the 21st century, did indeed involve a writer being put there after he criticises the government of being corrupt. The art was by Alcatena.

George was right about the second story being in the same comic, though it was called *Who Killed Cassidy?*.

Paul Tapner, 18 Alverton Ave
Poole, Dorset

A *Arena* was a story in **The Crunch**, a DC Thomson comic from the late Seventies. The main character was a journalist called Mark Sabor, living in a tyrannical future Britain where gladiatorial fighting went on to entertain the masses. Sentenced to the arena for criticising the government, Sabor was eventually instrumental in its overthrow.

There followed a sequel story where a mad computer took over the world and Sabor ended up back with his gladiator colleagues – they travelled the world to destroy the main processor sites of the machine. It was all wrapped up quickly in one final episode when **The Crunch** was merged with another comic.

Bill Graham, DC Thomson

Q I THINK I can answer two questions posed by George Hannah (*Q&A*, **CI** #88). The stories he remembers weren't in as early a British comic as you thought. I believe they were *Arena* and *Who Killed Cassidy?* and they appeared in **The Crunch**, which DC Thomson launched in January 1979.

In *Arena*, a dissident writer named Mark Sabor was captured by the authorities in 21st Century Britain. His punishment was to be sent to fight as a gladiator in a futuristic arena, televised nationwide to the bloodthirsty masses. The gladiators' armour and weapons were high-tech based on the Roman originals.

The story was scripted by David H. Taylor but it was notable for being the first work of Enrique Alcatena to appear in a British publication. Alcatena, an Argentinian, was only 21 when he drew *Arena* but his genius was already apparent. You can tell I'm a big fan of this much-under-rated artist.

Who Killed Kennedy? was heavily based on the conspiracy theories surrounding Kennedy's assassination. It was written by Bill Corderoy and drawn by another fine Argentinian artist named Magallanes.

How do I know all this? I was editor of **The Crunch**.

Commandos all

Alan Booth, Yorkshire

A IN ANSWER to the query about whether Americans had commandos in World War II: Here's some facts and a definition from someone who actually lived through

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the second World War and served in the Forces during the Fifties, with first hand involvement with a certain commando unit in Malaya.

The word Commando comes from the Portuguese word *Commandar*: to command. The term originated in South Africa, where it referred to Boer military reprisal raids against Africans in the 19th Century and, spookily enough, in the South Africa wars, against the British.

During WWII, it came to mean any member of a specially trained, highly mobile unit. These Commando units usually carried out operations on or behind enemy lines.

In Britain, the first Commando units were the British Combined Operations Command, who raided enemy-occupied territory in WWII after the evacuation of Dunkirk.

Also in 1940, British Army Commandos were sent to the Middle East, where they eventually executed one of their most daring exploits; the raid on Rommel's HQ in the desert in November 1941.

At war's end, the Army Commandos were disbanded, with the role of specialist covert units being taken over by the Royal Marines.

The Americans meanwhile had their own commando units, termed Rangers. Ergo: The Rangers were a commando unit. So it's all in the name and Stan Lee was quite within his rights to call Fury's unit Commandos, because, hey, that's what they were!

Oleshevsky indexed

Mike Allwood, 11 Coronation Cl Ruishton, Taunton

RE: Oleshevsky's Index series. Parts 9a and 9b did appear! 9a was **The X-Men** with Ghost Rider and the Champions; 9b was **Daredevil** with Black panther, Shanna the She Devil, Dazzler, Black Goliath and (for reasons known only to who knows who) The Human Fly!

Cover art by Brent Anderson and Frank Miller respectively. Also, the ICG series included **Legion of Super-Heroes**, **Doom Patrol** and **Hawkman**.

Baker updated

Richard J. Smith, Thurlstone, Sheffield, South Yorkshire

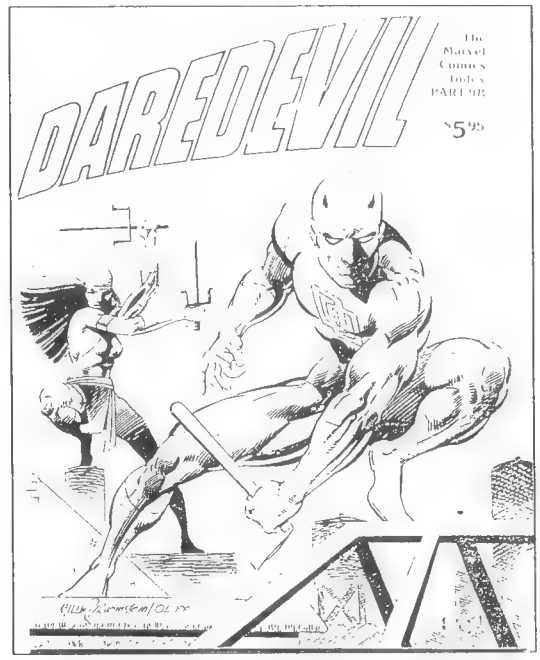
SORRY to pick you up in a smartarse way, but in answer to Dean Moody's question (*Q&A*, **CI** #88) you missed out Mr Baker's kickin'est (ahem) work: he did a Guy Garden story in the back of **JLA** #50.

Reuben Willmott, Ipswich

US magazine **Spin** (October issue) has an interesting 4-page strip by Kyle Baker about his San Diego Comic-Con 1997 visit.

The down side is that there is that moron Liam Galagher's ugly mug on the cover!

Those Olshevsky Marvel Indices



Martin Downham, West Ewell, Surrey
martin_downham@compuserve.com

JUST TO shed a little light on the Marvel Comics Indices as published by George Olshevsky (*Q&A*, **CI** #87).

Parts 9A and 9B were actually published. The former featured synopses of **The Uncanny X-Men** #1 to #152 plus Annuals #1-5, Giant-Size #1-2 and **Amazing Adventures** (X-Men reprint issues) #1-14.

The whole thing was topped off by a beautiful Brent Anderson and Terry Austin cover (what a team they would have made on the series!). It also featured **Ghost Rider** (2nd series) #1-63 and **The Champions** #1-17. **Black Goliath** and **The Dazzler** are announced on the cover as being included, but are not featured.

Instead, they were held over due to lack of space to Part 9B. This featured **Daredevil** #1-181, King-Size Special #1-4 and Giant-Size #1, plus **Marvel Adventures** #1-6, Kirby's **Black Panther** #1-15, **Shanna the She-Devil** #1-5, **Black Goliath** #1-5, **The Human Fly** #1-19 and **Dazzler** #1-14.

The preface to this final edition announces that the rest of the series (Parts 10 to 14) were cancelled, with a plan to revise the series, starting with **Spider-Man**, in 1982. This finally appeared under the Marvel imprint in 1985 as a nine-part mini-series which I *think* Olshevsky had some part in (certainly the format was very similar).

I hope this helps. Oh, and if anybody has the first four editions for sale, please send me an e-mail!

Rob Kirby, 2 Bramshott Close,
London Road, Hitchin, Herts SG4 9EP

A SLIGHT addition to the information given to David McKenzie (**CI** #88) concerning those (still often useful) Marvel Comics Index books. Issues 9A and 9B (which *were* published) ended the series with an announcement that the series was being suspended while expanded editions of the previous books were compiled. Sadly, these never appeared, neither did the planned Issues 10-14.

Following this, George Olshevsky teamed up with Marvel and produced its comic book sized indexes to the following: **The Amazing Spider-Man, Marvel Team-Up, The Fantastic Four** and a few other major series.

Sadly, Marvel never got to the more interesting – albeit more obscure – material from the company's early days.

I would certainly recommend buying any of the Olshevsky books if the opportunity arises. You won't regret it!

I too have fond (if not numerically intact) memories of the magazine-format card covered volumes, and I echo Rob's sentiment above. Dez

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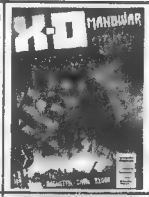

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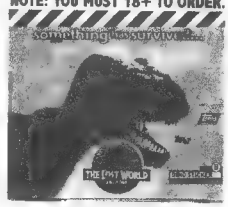

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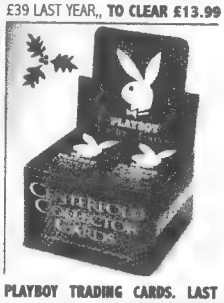

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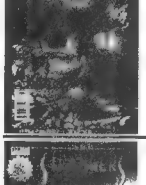

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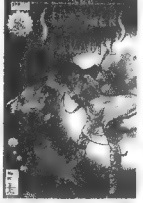

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7 ***VERY VERY GOOD*** *in one area, but only average in the other.*

Alternatively, very good all around.

6 ***GOOD.*** *An enjoyable middle of the road read (a dangerous pursuit!). Not particularly exciting, but solid and without disappointments.*

5 ***AN AVERAGE COMIC.*** *No more, no less. Simply average.*

Alternatively, an OK title which is dragged down by script or art.

4 ***FAIR.*** *One you can happily live without.*

3 ***POOR.*** *Not worth the price of admission.*

2 ***ABSOLUTELY AWFUL.*** *Not worth reading... even if it was free!*

1 ***DISASTROUS.*** *A comic that should be accompanied by a government health warning.*

0 ***THE ABSOLUTE OPPOSITE OF A 10.*** *Something so bad, it's hard to imagine anything worse. However, a zero score is used sparingly... in case the next issue actually is worse!*

REVIEWS

*It is the intention of **Comics International** to help comics readers keep abreast of the entire range of titles currently available through direct sale specialist shops, good newsagents and mail order companies. Few retailers allow titles in stock to be read before choosing purchases; **Comics International**'s reviews are designed to counter this and draw readers' attention to comics they might otherwise ignore. Naturally, this section should be of even greater benefit to readers who rely solely on mail order, as they can only judge the quality of a new title after purchase.*

Review codes: *General competitive performance of a title is measured on a scale of **1** to **10**. A specific issue's quality, as measured against previous issues: <- - -> to <+ + +>.*

*Two ratings are used for the sake of detailed and fair coverage. The number following each review (on a scale of 1 to 10) is a quality comparison with similar titles currently being published. We make no attempt to compare **Bone** to **X-Men**, but review each within the context of its own genre.*

The individual issue is also rated within the confines of its previous issues. Hence a comparatively dull title may get a low number but a high rating for the specific issue reviewed (ranging from <-> to <+ + +> if there has been a notable improvement.

Reviews Editor: Sarah Bolesworth

Reviewing panel: Fabio Barbieri (FPB), Grant Doig (GSD), Jonathan Edwards (JE), Rol Hirst (RH), Adrian Kermode (AK), Mike Kidson (MK)

DARK HORSE

Ghost in the Shell

by Shirow; Manga

In this 352-page thriller ($24.95), a covert team of cybernetically enhanced humans is threatened by an artificial intelligence. Headache-inducing plots and oblique dialogue are offset by great art in Masamune Shirow's most accessible, thought provoking work yet. (JE) **9**

Gunsmith Cats: Goldie v Misty 2

by Sonoda

<+ +> A slower pace than usual, as Sonoda takes the time to fill in the plot and throw in some nice character touches and a surprise ending. Other creators could learn from this man how to convey nail-biting tension and drama — without word balloons. (AK) **7**

Nexus: Nightmare in Blue 4

by Baron & Rude + Martin

<-> The people of Ylum finally reveal their choice of a mass-murderer; meanwhile, Nexus's lover, Sundra, has to decide between motherhood and the presidency. Rude's elegant art feels a little uninspired here in a slightly unsatisfying conclusion to this well-crafted series. (JE) **7**

Oh My Goddess! Meet Me by the Seashore

by Fujishima

A day at the beach takes some strange and humorous twists as Urd tries to trick Keichi into telling Belldandy how he feels about her while her sister Skuld does everything is her power to stop him. Fujishima's art is excellent, as usual. (AK) **6**

Zombie World 3

by Mignola & McEown

<+ -> Story and art are both as offbeat as ever in a dark ending to the first story-arc of this unique series. Azzul Gotha's "undeath" releases a horde of zombies on the world and sets the scene for future terrors. (AK) **7**

8th Wonder

by Janes & Plunkett

Reprinting the original **Dark Horse Presents** serial, this 24-page tale is the Jules Verne-style fantasy of Victorian England's bid to construct a transatlantic bridge. Kilian Plunkett is a versatile, accomplished newcomer who combines tight, detailed, European-influenced visuals with solid stories. (JE) **7**

DC COMICS

Birds of Prey 1

by Dixon & Land + Geraci

No blood-spattered bosomy babes with impossibly long legs, just two strong, sexy, intelligent women in sensible costumes in this comic, which has great writing, gorgeous art and even wonderful colouring. It will never sell, of course. (AK) **8**

Challengers of the Unknown 12

by Grant & Leon + Reinhold

<-> Rescuing their missing patron from the time-travelling villain, the Challs question the mysterious plane crash that brought them together. Living up to the comic's title, Grant challenges our preconceptions while entertaining us with morally ambiguous tales which do not need superheroics to make them work. (AK) **7**

The Creeper 2

by Kaminski & Martinbrough + Buscema

<+> Kaminski's having fun weaving the Creeper's chequered continuity into the story as old friends and foes return from the dead to confuse things even more. Martinbrough's raw, edgy pencils expertly capture the insanity of this title. Not a book that strangers to the character will find easy going, though. (AK) **7**

Flash 132

by Morrison + Millar & Ryan + Nyberg

<+ -> The final battle with the Suit is as inventive and original as we have come to expect from Morrison and Millar, who show a love for the history of this title which equals that of their predecessors. And the arrival of the Mirror Master — the one Grant Morrison created — bodes well for next month. (RH) **8**

The Invisibles 11

by Morrison & Jiminez + Stokes + Kryssing

<+ -> Grant Morrison pumps the paranoia up to impossible levels as Roy is captured and forced to *rediscover* her suppressed past. Is it the truth, or more manipulation from the enemy? Nothing can be trusted or taken for granted — a frightening premise. (RH) **9**

JLA: American Dreams

by Morrison & Porter + Dell

Collecting **JLA** issues 5-9 in the current best-selling series, the stories in this book are fast-paced entertainment with flashy art — though it is, admittedly, lightweight fodder aimed mainly at a pre-teen readership. (JE) **6**

JLA: Paradise Lost 2

by Millar & Olivetti

<+> Millar gets into his storytelling stride and Olivetti's art has never looked better than in this action-packed issue. The renegade Angel Lord Asmodel makes a chilling villain as he hunts down Zauriel and kills Shannon, his mortal lover. Unfortunately Zauriel is as poor a character as Morrison's other recent creation, Aztek. (AK) **7**

JLA: Year One 1

by Waid + Augustyn & Kitson

A somewhat dull beginning, making this appear more of a cash-in than expected from the creative team. The writers strive in vain for a sense of Sixties nostalgia — strange, because they have done it before. But for Barry Kitson at least it must be the dream job, and he is obviously relishing it. (RH) **6**

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OPENS MIDDAY

from the JLA stable, showcasing the original League's early days. Although the sinister secret organisation plot has on it, writing and art are excellent, embracing DC's Silver Age crisp, colourful sense of fun and revealing new facets to old characters. (AK) **7**

JLA 14

by Morrison & Porter + Dell

<+> As the future League make a last stand against Darkseid, Aquaman, Flash and Green Lantern escape back to the present to save history. Morrison captures the hopeless heroism of the doomed League superbly, and the Atom and Green Arrow's slaying of Darkseid is worthy of Jack Kirby at his best. (AK) **9**

Legionnaires 54

by Peyer + McCraw & Moy + Carani

<+> Somebody is manipulating the time-lost Legionnaires, feeding them memories of adventures in the Forties. But to what end? An interesting enough issue, but still an unnecessary diversion from the main storylines. (GSD) **6**

Legionnaires 55

by Peyer + McCraw & Moy + Carani

<+ +> The Composite Man returns, and with half of the Legion away in the 20th century, how will they prevail against him? A single-issue story that despite using the incredibly annoying Lori as its central character is very entertaining. (GSD) **7**

Legion of Super-Heroes 98

by Peyer + McCraw & Moder + Boyd

<+> Brainiac 5 finally manages to create a means by which the Legion can return home to the 30th Century. Sadly, he does too good a job and a sentient computer takes objection to being deactivated after sending the Legion home. Cue fight, and the lead-in to a Legionnaire's death, perhaps. Another peak in the series that has had of late many peaks — and many troughs. (GSD) **8**

Legion of Super-Heroes 99

by Peyer + McCraw & Moder + Aucoin + Boyd

<+ -> The Legion, aided by Impulse, Superboy and Robin, confront the apoplectic sentient computer with little success as the build-up to issue 100 builds apace. The regular creators offer their usual sterling work, and Derec Aucoin's art in the latter half of the book merges well with existing style. (GSD) **8**

Preacher 33

by Ennis & Dillon

<-> If any criticism can be levelled at Garth Ennis, it is that like his hero Quentin Tarantino, he needs to devise a new ending — rather than re-using the gunfight/ blow-out/ massacre cliché. This is fun, as always, but it would have been preferable to find out more about Les Enfants du Sang before the inevitable carnage. (RH) **8**

Spectre 60

by Ostrander & Mandrake

<+ -> The Spectre delves deep within himself as his search for God continues and more secrets are told of the origins of Corrigan and his alter ego. Another tightly plotted issue from John Ostrander (hard to believe he is the same Ostrander who writes **Heroes for Hire**). Tom Mandrake, meanwhile, is a magician. (RH) **8**

Starman 38

by Robinson & Abell + Vines + Lee

<-> To show the significance of the threat posed by the hero's arch foe, the Mist, Robinson uses her to destroy a new incarnation of the Justice League Europe — albeit one consisting mostly of second stringers. It is all a little too calculated, although the twist involving Mist's child is interesting. Dusty Abell's art is virtually unrecognisable. (RH) **6**

Uncle Sam 1

by Darnell & Ross; Vertigo

Curiously, it is hard not to compare this with the return of Captain America at Marvel. Although entirely different in style, both take a US icon and rework it for the Nineties. But a much deeper knowledge of American history is needed for this book which, despite being well written, may turn off British readers. Alex Ross does another sumptuous art job, but surely the JFK sequence is a cliché — that whole episode has been done to death now. (RH) **6**

Wonder Woman – Amazonia

by Messner-Loebs & Winslade

What if Wonder Woman had been brought up in Victorian England? Rather surprisingly, Messner-Loebs pulls a strong and intelligent story out of this unlikely premise, although his constant references to pre-*Crisis* Wonder Woman may baffle younger readers. Winslade's artwork is gorgeous, his heavy crosshatching evoking an entirely apt engraved look. (MK) **8**

IMAGE COMICS

Art of Chiodo

WildStorm

A 96-page paperback ($19.95) collecting the paintings, mostly Good Girl pin-ups, of master colourist Joe Chiodo. Although his later work is more spontaneous, Chiodo's earlier work, with its broader content, is more satisfying. (JE) **7**

Ascension 3

by Finch w/Batt; Top Cow

<+ -> Petra is held captive in the Deadlands, and only Lucien and Andromeda can save her. The villains are clichéd and the storyline too choppy, but the linework is pure classicism from Dave Finch, the Michelangelo of comics. (JE) **7**

Astro City 11

by Busiek & Anderson + Blyberg

<-> Jack-in-the-box discovers, to his horror, that he is responsible for a particularly unpleasant set of murderous future vigilantes. It is interesting that even this sunniest of superhero books sees the future as a nightmare — dystopian futures seem part of contemporary orthodoxy. (FPB) **8**

The Awakening 1

by Blue

A woman is found dying in the street and is rushed to an operating theatre with bullet wounds. As she lies in a coma, she has visions of her inner demons; meanwhile, in reality, someone does want her dead. Despite a few clichés like "confronting your inner demons", this is a superior job. (FPB) **8**

Darkness 9

by Z + Wohl & Silvestri; Top Cow

<+ -> Marc Silvestri is a superb illustrator whose rushed art here resorts to that tired Top Cow standby of large head-shots and little else. Silvestri can do better, and as a best-selling title, the art *should* be better. (JE) **5**

Desperadoes 3

by Mariotte & Cassaday + Bell; Homage

<-> Although the dialogue does not ring true in places and the heroes are saved by a *huge* coincidence, this title still delivers the goods with a plot, art and story that does not swamp its Western charm and atmosphere with dollops of supernatural horror. A treat for anyone who enjoys good comics. (AK) **8**

DV8 v Black Ops 2

by Bury & Norton + Hope; WildStorm

<+> This issue the Black Ops take centre stage as we follow their preparations to infiltrate Ivana's secret base before she can use the stolen nanotech to boost DV8's powers. Again, writer and artists outdo DV8's regular creators with a well-written script and impressive visuals. (AK) **7**

DV8 13

by Heisler & Kirby + Vines + Rizzo; WildStorm

<+ -> Ivana uses her team of super-brats and every dirty political trick in the book to gain control of shady spy organisation International Operations. Heisler's script is too wordy and the sparse art varies between good and mediocre, but the change of direction and incoming art team promise better things. (AK) **5**

Gen^{13} Bootleg 13

by Wieringo w/Case; WildStorm

Grunge hikes into the desert, where an encounter with a coyote leads to a bizarre turn of events. A fine writing debut from artist Mike Wieringo is marred by a weak ending; but this series is consistently more entertaining than its parent title. (JE) **7**

Gen^{13} 23

by Choi & Rio; WildStorm

<-> Stranded on a future Earth, Gen^{13} are the world's only hope of winning a protracted war against the alien D'Rahn. Artist Rio improves every issue, unlike Choi's dry scripting, which is as demanding as ever. (JE) **5**

Gen^{13} 24

by Choi + Peterson & Rio; WildStorm

<+ -> With the world on the brink of destruction, the time-displaced Gen^{13} members have to return to the past to change future events. Guest artists Raney and Shoemaker are good, and despite initially bland dialogue, the pace builds to a cliffhanger. (JE) **5**

Mage: The Hero Defined 4

by Wagner

<+ -> It is true, then. Mind-altering drugs *do* open you up to other realities. At least they do when the goddess Isis prepares them. Some spectacular dream sequences and fight scenes, and one of the best and most subtly dramatic final pages seen in quite a while. (FPB) **8**

Savage Dragon 43

by Larsen; Highbrow

<-> The erratic plot bounces around like a kangaroo on a trampoline. A confusing yet dynamic read that pays homage to Jack Kirby's New Gods — and includes a startling surprise for regular readers. (JE) **6**

Spawn 67

by McFarlane & Capullo + Wolf; TMP

<+ -> Spawn and the homeless inhabitants of Rat Alley debate the nature of heaven, hell and belief — a little heavy going, but effective given Spawn's origin, and serving to underline McFarlane's growing skill as a writer. Capullo's art becomes more like classic Eisner or Ploog with every issue. (AK) **7**

StormWatch 2

by Ellis & Jiminez + McKenna; WildStorm

<+ -> StormWatch Black uncovers

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something nasty sealed off by the government in a small town; Fuji, meanwhile, reveals a surprising and hilarious side-effect of his powers. Ellis is taking things easy after the classic *Change or Die* storyline, but he is still entertaining, and the art is pleasant enough. (AK) **8**

Voodoo 1

by Moore & Lopez; WildStorm

Whatever happened to the ex-WildCAT, Voodoo? Writer Alan Moore has the answer, involving New Orleans, showgirls, the supernatural and murder. Through skilful dialogue and deft storytelling, Moore makes potentially lame ideas intriguing. The artwork here is solid, if a little stiff. (JE) **7**

MARVEL COMICS

Amazing Spider-Man 430

by DeFalco & Bennett + LaRosa + Milgrom

<- -> Featuring the return of the least interesting villain, Carnage, and made worse by the fill-in art from Bennett. But the subplots are still engaging. (RH) **4**

Cable 48

by Robinson & Ladronn

<+> A journalist stumbles on the Hellfire Club's secrets, thus becoming a target. As their troops close in, her only hope is Cable, who is also hunted by the Club. An intriguing introduction to what promises to be a worthwhile multi-part story. Robinson's plotting and character writing, as always, is of the highest quality, and Ladronn's art is distinctive, helping make this more than just another X-title. (GSD) **9**

Cable 50

by Robinson & Ladronn

A double issue sees Cable's attempt to prevent Apocalypse's herald ushering in the world's destruction. Jose Ladronn's exciting art is a raw fusion of Jack Kirby and Moebius — he is set to become a major talent. (JE) **8**

Captain America 1

by Waid & Garney + Wiacek

The most sensible thing Marvel could have done after the *Heroes Reborn* farrago — that is, giving **Captain America** back to the guys who were doing it right already. Waid manages to write the character in a way that makes even his patriotism acceptable to the British palate. (RH) **8**

A disorientated Captain America promptly confronts anti-US terrorists in Tokyo. It is refreshing to see a writer in the entertainment industry handling complex political themes with maturity. It is to be hoped that this enlightened attitude will be pursued. (JE) **7**

Deadpool 11

by Kelly & Woods

<+ -> Catapulted back in time, Deadpool and Blind Alfred have to find a way home before they alter history. But the fact that they have already injured May Parker and bump into Kraven the Hunter could put a stop to their plans. A truly entertaining book, full of the belly-laughs that were once an **Impulse** hallmark. (GSD) **8**

Fantastic Four 1

by Lobdell & Davis + Farmer

By successfully capturing the classic family feel of this book, Scott Lobdell reveals how the characters themselves are rather trapped in the past. There is a real danger here — change for change's sake does not really work, yet in the Nineties does the *real* version hold much interest? Whatever, it is a shame that it is David and Farmer, not Lobdell, who are leaving soon — the art is gorgeous. (RH) **7**

Alan Davis's sheer craftsmanship and design sense places him among the élite of comic-book artists, and any initial reservations concerning Scott Lobdell's writing abilities proves unfounded. A sensational return to form for the Fantastic Four — enjoy it while it lasts... (JE) **9**

Man-Thing 2

by DeMatteis & Sharp; Strange Tales

<+ -> Sharp's artwork is rich and dark enough for a horror set in the Florida Everglades, but DeMatteis can do better than this: a swamp monster and his female companion are sent on a quest by a modern magician — now where have we heard *that* one? (AK) **5**

Marvel Team-Up 5

by Peyer & Grindberg + Giordano

<-> Spider-Man tracks down the Authority — only to have the Watcher break his "non-interference" code by having everybody forget everything at the end of the issue. The artwork is so old-fashioned it could have come from the original series. (RH) **3**

Moon Knight 1

by Moench & Edwards + Campanella

It may have been hoped that the original writer could resurrect Moon Knight with new interest, but this plotless jumble misses the mark. Is it a dream? Or hallucination? Or a botched excuse to cram all Moon Knight's former supporting cast into one issue? And Tommy Edwards is no Bill Sienkiewicz. (RH) **2**

Sensational Spider-Man 23

by DeZago & Wieringo + Case

<+ -> Spider-Man and Doctor Strange normally do not mix well — they are too divergent. However, DeZago's handling of both characters here is spot on, with villain Buel pitched perfectly between them with his mystical powers and wisecracks. Gorgeous art, too. *This* is what **Marvel Team-Up** should be like. (RH) **9**

Silver Surfer 134

by DeMatteis & Grummett + Ryan

<+> The Surfer's quest into the mysterious Other continues with added interest in his blossoming relationship Alicia Masters. Tom Grummett comes aboard to provide a Moebius-like look for the hero. (RH) **8**

Spider-Man: The Manga 1

by Tkegami

American Spider-Man stories do not go down well in Japan, apparently. Hence this, the manga version, which proves equally difficult for those used to the American version. Perhaps this is excellent in its own way, but it is not **Spider-Man**. (RH) **4**

Spider-Man: The Manga 2

by Ikegami

What a disappointment. This claims to be by the great Riochi Ikegami, he of **Mai** and **Crying Freeman**, but the art is at best studio fodder, with only the slightest similarity to Ikegami's best, and the story is a weak, watered down Japanese version of Ditko's Spider-Man origins. Quality? Zero. (FPB) **3**

Spider-Man: The Venom Agenda

by Hama & Lyle + Jones

Venom sets out to kill Jameson and Spider-Man tries to save his boss while stopping Venom spilling the beans about his secret identity. With a plotline suited only to sitcom yet played straight, and a ludicrous *Oops! That big explosion made me forget what I know about Spider-Man* ending, the only worthwhile element here is the art. (RH) **3**

Thunderbolts 10

by Busiek & Bagley + Russell

<+> At a gala to thank them for their work, SHIELD finally expose the Thunderbolts as the Masters of Evil, who promptly go on the run. A book full of twists and turns, with Busiek's plot and script making up for Bagley's somewhat mundane art. (GSD) **8**

Uncanny X-Men 349

by Lobdell & Bachalo

<+> Maggot closes in on the team in New York as, in Antarctica, Gambit decides that he wants everybody to know his secret. Another excellent

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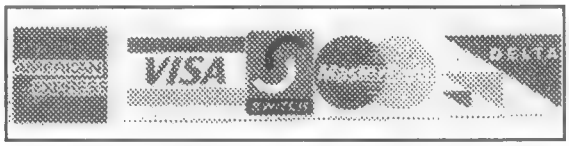

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build-up to an anniversary issue; but it is to be hoped that this one does not fizzle out, like *Operation Zero Tolerance*. (GSD) 8

Uncanny X-Men 350

by Lobdell & Maduriera + Smith

<+> Gambit is put on trial by Erik the Red for his crimes against mutant-kind. The team vows to stand by him — until finding out the nature of his crimes. An excellent finale to the plot which, as usual, manages to slip in the seeds for more complications in the X-Men's lives. Seagle's script here is surprisingly good when compared with **Alpha Flight**, but surely Maduriera could have at least pencilled the whole issue, having had time off supposedly to do it. (GSD) 8

Werewolf by Night 1

by Jenkins & Manco; Strange Tales

A good reintroduction to one of Marvel's better horror titles. Jenkins does a decent job of sketching in the character's history, introducing his supporting cast and setting up a plotline about a wolf cult. Manco's art is exceptional, and his bestial werewolf looks great. (AK) 7

Wolverine 119

by Ellis & Yu

<+ + +> Years ago Logan befriended a hitman known as the White Ghost, whom he killed after he murdered a friend's father. Now, in true comic-book style, he's back and gunning for him. A perfect combination of story and art here, and it is to be hoped that Ellis's run will be extended beyond four issues. (GSD) 9

X-Men 76

by Kelly & Pacheco + Thibert

Joe Kelly is a good writer. I have not read an X-title for years, and yet I understood exactly what was going on — Scott and Jean leave, while Wolverine and Ororo have to cope with some distinctly iffy - new members. And I was quite interested. That, and reliable Carlos Pacheco's work make a pleasant comic. (FPB) 7

US INDEPENDENTS

Ash: Cinder & Smoke 5

by Waid + Augustyn & Ramos + Palmiotti; Event

<-> A charred Ash lies dying after a clash with the villain, Smoke; New York's firefighters are caught in the middle of a mob war and Smoke's identity is finally revealed. Sound stuff. (JE) 6

Angel Claw

by Moebius; NBM

Moebius's black and white fantasy illustrations collected in a large 72-page hardback ($19.95). Masterful technique and composition marry with Moebius's vivid imagination to create subversive works of great beauty. (JE) 10

Black Hole 4

by Burns; Fantagraphics

During a communal dope-smoking session teenager Keith Pearson meets a strange young woman. Set against bold blacks, creator Charles Burns's beautifully clean brushwork is rendered with restraint and precision while the dark, disturbing fantasy evokes adolescent paranoia and sexual tension in Seventies small-town America. (JE) 9

The Cerebus Guide to Self-Publishing

by Sim; Aardvark Vanaheim

Like soccer, Dave Sim's tour around publishing is a game of two halves. His opinions on television are the hilarious proof that having given a lot of thought to a subject does not mean having anything intelligent to say about it; but his thoughts on comics proper are practical, intelligent and valid — and indispensable to anybody thinking of a career in the business. (FPB) 7

The Coven 3

by Loeb & Churchill + Rapmund; Awesome

<+ -> Ian Churchill is still the same — with suspicions of intellectual and religious depths side by side with nude scenes, and hollow dramatics along with grimly thoughtful moments. There is a spark of quality in this book, but is it sufficient to ever set it alight? (FPB) 5

Crust

by Pinchera; Top Shelf

Rick Pinchera's cartoon strip for a Portland weekly paper avoids the danger of gag repetition by sticking to an unnamed central character and changing constantly everything else. This leaves the reader free to enjoy the bleak, penetrating wit of the strip and Pinchera's sharp, controlled cartooning. Production values are first class. (MK) 8

Detour

by Brubaker; Alternative Press

This is a troubling and difficult story about a young man who is clearly deranged, yet whose concerns evoke so much sympathy that we find ourselves thinking as he does. A demanding book, but a genuine masterpiece. (FPB) 10

The Dark Fringe: Spirits of the Dead 2

by Torre & Kisee; Brainstorm

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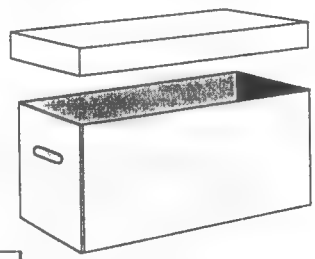

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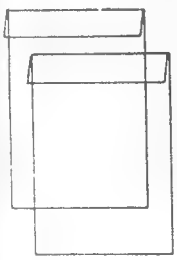

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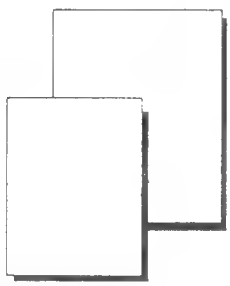

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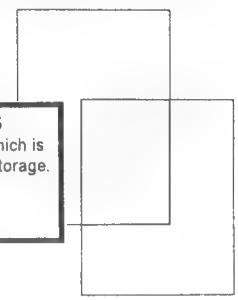

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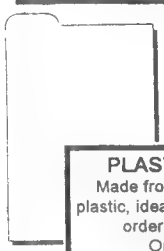

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The only Brainstorm comic that is not *quite* a criminal waste of paper, this grim fantasy of science fiction Mafia men and their wars, although hardly original, has some drama and interest. Some may think Miller does the same better in **Sin City**, but this is not bad all the same. (FPB) **6**

Here Comes the Big People

by Beaulieu & Connor + Palmiotti; Event

Unhappy computer mogul Austin Milcsop inadvertently creates the ultimate mother figure. The narrative flow is clumsy, requiring some fine-tuning, and artist Amanda Connor is not at her best. A uniquely offbeat satirical tale which sadly does not fulfill its potential. (JE) **4**

Kaboom! 2

by Loeb & Matsuda + Sibal; Awesome

<+ -> Young Geoff Sunrise tries to familiarise himself with his powers, nearly wrecking the city in the process. The new Awesome line is succeeding because the people involved seem to be happy with what they are doing — which, in Matsuda's case, means that the odd storytelling glitch is compensated for by overall vigour and fun. (FPB) **7**

Kaboom! 3

by Loeb & Matsuda + Sibal; Awesome

<+ -> A well-managed showdown between Geoff Sunrise and Scarlett — who may be his dead brother — leaves plenty of loose ends to pick up in future issues. This a strong, fun, enjoyable adventure comic, skilfully written by Jeph Loeb. And *do* check out the last panel. (FPB) **7**

One Millennium 5

by Basich & Bollenbacher; Hunter

An ambitious and quite well-made science fiction epic that takes us into the middle of a conflict with tendencies to degenerate into cosmic civil war. Not hugely inventive or novel, it is nevertheless a well-crafted, impressive piece. (FPB) **7**

Pigeonman 1

by Fredrick & Noga; Above & Beyond

The more or less tongue-in-cheek story of a superhero with pigeon powers who is framed by a woman with feline powers. This is not very original or funny, and the supposedly humorous back-up strip, about a horse, is fairly irritating. (FPB) **4**

Pin-Up 1

by Berthet & Yann; Blase

Set during the second world war, this 44-page homage to American newsstrip veteran Milton Caniff is the first volume in a series about the volatile romance between a GI and his lover, Dottie, who finds fame as a newsstrip artist's model. A lovely book from the European creators. (JE) **8**

Pulp 1

various creators; Viz Communications

Manga for Grownups is the dubiously worded sell-line on the voyeuristic cover of this 128-page anthology. But it showcases a broad range of styles from photorealism to underground, so if you think Japanese comics are all big eyes and mecha, then look at this, and think again. (JE) **6**

Rib 3

by Ford & Kelleher; Caliber

<-> While the first two issues focused on a fine fictional analysis of racial prejudice, here we have a nothing but a few jarring simplistic fantasy elements. Still, three issues are hardly enough to assess the entire series. (FPB) **7**

Skeleton Key 27

by Watson; Amaze Ink

<+> Showdown: Yale quite legitimately wants to know why his life and soul were endangered and was told nothing of Tamsin and Kisune's powers, or their adventures — and he will not be fobbed off by female chauvinist clichés. A touching, dramatic resolution, which happens in the rain, of course. (FPB) **7**

Skeleton Key 28

by Watson; Amaze Ink

<+ -> Tamsin attempts to sort out Kitty's accommodation but fails to notice her emotional problems. Watson's shift away from mystical mayhem towards more domestic scenarios has vastly improved this title, which by now is looking like a new wave *Betty & Veronica* for the thinking reader. Credit to publisher Amaze Ink for letting the title grow and develop. (MK) **7**

Speedy: A Picture Book

by Craghead; Crap-Head Press

One of the odder Xeric Award-winners, this is a curious series of meditations on the fall of a leaf in autumn written and drawn in a personal, almost impenetrable artistic language. Nevertheless, there is poetry and meaning in there somewhere. (FPB) **7**

Steviebear 7

by Harrison; Belfax

<+ -> The severely irritating prose pages continue this issue — and there are five of them in a row, no less. As an inept would-be assassin is loosed upon the heroes, the goblins and Baron Azura are driven to war by sinister interests. This would be *such* a good comicbook

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were it not for all those text-only pages. (FPB) **6**

Supreme 54

by Moore, Veitch, Gebbie, Sprouse & Morrigan; Awesome

<+ -> Despite the fine ideas, the human touches, the fascinating background, the frequently excellent art, this series does not really work. Everything is so pat, so facile, so quickly resolved. Here, the problems of an unwillingly resurrected woman are settled in three panels... (FPB) **7**

Thieves & Kings 19

by M'Oak; I-Box

<-> With the poisonous influence of the evil Prince — who now rules the city of Oceansend — in every corner, nobody can be trusted. So it is that little Heath, looking for somebody to help cure Rubel's wound, does nothing but draw the enemy to him. How will the two of them escape from danger? (FPB) **8**

Top Shelf 5

various creators; Top Shelf

<+ -> A beautifully turned-out anthology of work by a fine new crop of minicomics creators. There is a little too much gloomy introspection for my taste, but who am I to argue with the zeitgeist? Highlights include Dylan Williams's speed-blurred, powerful depiction of a bank robbery, Jennifer Daydreamer's warm evocation of childhood and a stark piece of collage by Gav Burrows. (MK) **8**

UK TITLES

Commando Picture Library 3065

by McLoughlin; DC Thomson

The story of a Falklands war veteran coming to terms with his memories is competently constructed, but the best thing about it is that it contains plenty of night and underwater scenes which allow classic artist Denis McLoughlin to show off his unique way with shadows and murk. This is the finest looking British comic this year. (MK) **8**

The Dandy 2924

various creators; DC Thomson

Desperate Dan returns for the 60th birthday issue — no surprises there. Apart from that, this is the best anniversary issue yet from DC Thomson, a well-conceived mix of new and old in which the theme is constantly present but not intrusive. In recent years the title has become increasingly lacklustre, making this effort a welcome improvement. (MK) **7**

DNA Swamp 1

various creators; DNA Design

The first of this series from a new publisher in Belfast is very reminiscent of early 1980s **2000AD**, which is no bad thing. Some of the art is a bit loose and scrappy, but on the whole it is a cleanly drawn, sharply designed science fiction comic that shows a lot of promise. (MK) **6**

Octobriana: Filling in the Blanks 1

by Taylor & Roberts; £2.15 from Artful Salamander, 30b Wentworth Ave, Southboune, Bournemouth BH5 2EF

Taylor's intriguing story, told from the perspective of a new character and coupled with an article on the eponymous character's unique history, makes this a perfect introduction for new readers — and Dave Roberts's art puts most mainstream titles to shame. This could be the best **Octobriana** yet. (AK) **8**

SMALL PRESS

The Alchemist 3

by Millar; from D Hobden, 46 Canning Road, London E17 6LT

Send only two second-class stamps for John Millar's collations of science fiction, mysticism, childhood memories, Scots dialect and off the wall humour — drawn in a unique, blocky style in black and white — which are an acquired taste. Most who try it end up hooked. This is a ridiculously cheap way to join in with the addicts. (MK) **7**

Bellyflop 2

by Mullens & various; £1.50 from K Mullens, 39 Hill Street, Totterdown, Bristol BS3 4TS

Every so often a comic comes along which reminds me that there are so few places left in the British industry for aspiring writers and artists to find work and gain experience. Kieron Mullens's moody science fiction story shows style, flair and imagination — he deserves to be nurtured by a major publisher. As it is, this will probably remain another small press gem. (MK) **6**

Flying Monkey 1

by Perrins & Livesey; £1 from Perrins/Livesey, 29 Balfour Road, Fulwood, Preston, PR2 3BX

A two-handed comic booklet featuring a variety of realistic and fantasy stories with a definite character of their own. Simon Perrins is the more individual but his art needs work; Andrew Livesey is the more accomplished but owes too much to Evan Dorkin. Promising, nevertheless, overall. (FPB) **5**

Fuzzball Christmas Special

by Parkin; 60p from G Parkin, 8 Newbury Way, Cusworth, Doncster DN6 8PY

Faced with numerous demands for more Fuzzball material, Gary Parkin has produced a tasty little seasonal extra, nice and filling with a touch of pathos to keep it from getting too sweet and sickly. Fuzz and friends swap presents and have a good day — what more could you want from a Christmas issue? (MK) **7**

In the Flash 1

by Andeloe; FL12.95 from M Andeloe, Balthazar Floriszstr.43, 1071 VA Amsterdam, Netherlands

This wordless comic is strong stuff, an oozing, hallucinogenic vision of a man plunging through the morasses of his mind in search of escape — from what, to what? No answers are offered, but the ride is sweet and scary, and the black and white art conveys the horror of the scenario much more clearly than colour could. (MK) **6**

Itsy Bitsy 1

various creators; 90p from A Konky Kru, PO Box 8892, London SW15

Nine stories by international contributors offering diverse takes on the disadvantages of being big. The comic itself is tiny — A7 — making this a satisfyingly realised project and proving that a very small comic can be a chunky and absorbing read. Ignore the size of the price of the thing, this is just a delight. (MK) **8**

Mezozoic 1

by Smith; £2.50 from A Smith, 159 Stratton Way, Biggleswade SG18 0NN

A fine example of manga style integrated with occidental action-oriented science fiction storytelling. Adrian Smith's art is a little stiff — a tighter grasp of anatomical principles would help — but he has put together an original and gripping first issue which leaves the reader wanting more. Nice beginning. (MK) **6**

Missing 3

by Chapman; £2.20 from Autocratix Press, PO Box 131, Norwich, Norfolk NR1 4RF

David Chapman has opted for professional production; I am not convinced that his artwork measures up to the format as yet but his storyline, a blend of future eco-disaster, detective thriller and new romanticism is a skilfully constructed and gripping one. With more finish this could be a contender. (MK) **6**

Part Time Lights 3

by Brown; 50p from T Brown, 22 Woodborough Drive, Winscombe, Somerset BS25 1HB

More dry, scurrilous humour from the master of that sort of thing. I have no idea how he manages to turn these out at such a rate, but he does, and makes me laugh every time. This means either that the comic is funny or I need taking out for an airing... (MK) **7**

Poker-Faced 1

various creators; £1 from Negative Space Productions, 29 Westhill Avenue, Bingley BD13 5BB

Four stories — a whimsical fantasy and three takes on satanic horror: lunatic asylum; medieval monastery; TV evangelist show. Less of the satanic horror would have been better, the varied approaches seemed too similar. It shows promise, but not much more than that. (MK) **4**

Strands 2

various creators; £1 from P Ashton, Guild Box 123, Edgbaston Park Road, Birmingham B15 2TU

Like the first issue, an invaluable what's-on guide to the small press, mostly written by prolific Pete Ashton, with a couple of excellent strips this time — an old Samurai Jam episode by Andi Watson and a delightful multi-genre story by superb Sam Learmonth. (MK) **6**

Space Opera 4

by Weller; £1.75 from M Weller, 3 Queen Adelaide Court, Queen Adelaide Road, London SE20 7DZ

As if to confuse those who thought Mike Weller was putting out something like a regular comic here, this issue consists of prose and illustrations. No problem — he has already established his mix and match approach in this title, blending all kinds of media, so it is easy to accept this as a "story paper" instalment. (MK) **8**

Wormwood 1

by Webster; £1.50 + p&p from C Webster, 13a Dulwich Road, London SE15 0NT

Probably the most bizarre hero ever conceived, Chris Webster's Wallace Wormwood is a deranged porn actor targeted by insane conspiracists who want to change mankind's fate. It may sound overblown, but Webster's style makes it work. (FPB) **8**

Webster's new series opts for a simpler narrative format than that of his masterful Malus, making this an easy way into his extraordinary manoeuverings. But it is not an altogether easy ride, Webster is building in mysterious resonances and seems to be dealing with taboos which are not yet fully exploited. Porn stars and space rockets, anybody? (MK) **8**

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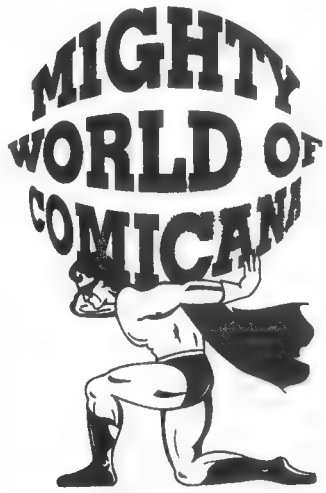

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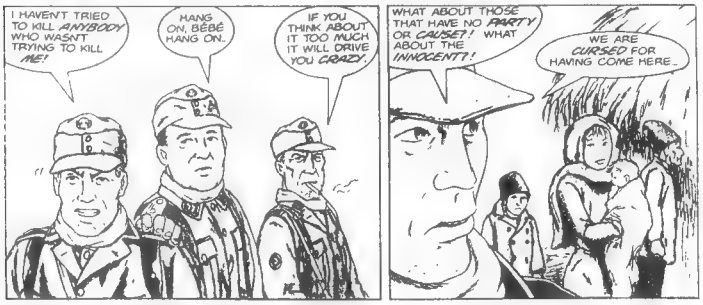
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WHAT ABOUT THOSE THAT HAVE NO PARTY OR CAUSE? WHAT ABOUT THE INNOCENT?
WE ARE CURSED FOR HAVING COME HERE.

Witches' Caldron

by Wayne Vansant, Heritage Collection; $3.50
Review by Fabio P. Barbieri

THIS comic is a scandal. Wayne Vansant has earned a good deal of respect for his well-researched and humane books about the American Civil War, but with this job, he has thrown it all away.

Witches' Caldron purports to describe a World War Two Russian front battle, based on the memoirs of one Leon Degrelle, which Vansant has not seen fit to question or double-check.

This is curious, as Degrelle, a Belgian, was by his own admission interned by the Belgian government as war approached, after which he promptly joined the SS when the Nazis invaded his own country.

Anything Degrelle says after that is self-justification. The SS were not soldiers, but paramilitary terrorists set up for political murder. Any SS member who denies that he was a murderer is a liar. Apart from the descriptions of battle scenes, this entire book is about whitewashing this undeniable and unanswerable fact.

And there is a further depth of abjection: as every historian knows, as a matter of policy, the war in Russia was fought with a degree of cruelty and savagery known nowhere else. Hitler ordered that the Russians be treated as lower than cattle, and most of the army – and all the SS, of course – obeyed him. But when Vansant finally deigns to notice the war crimes, he specifically denies this historical fact: the killing, he claims, began among the Russians themselves, and spread to Axis armies via a sort of contagion (*below*). This is a black lie. And when one of his SS troopers whines that "I haven't tried to kill **anybody** who wasn't trying to kill **me**" (*above*), I don't know whether to laugh or rage.

When we finally do witness an undeniable war crime – the murder of hundreds of prisoners (page 20) – Vansant repeats the excuse that it was necessary, because once set free, the prisoners would be armed and sent back to fight – as if a few hundred freed prisoners would make any difference to the giant Soviet war effort!

This page is a scandal in itself, and I frankly cannot understand what Vansant, who is not a fool, was on about when he wrote it.

In fact, Degrelle had already been a Fascist terrorist in his own country before the war, something Vansant completely misrepresents, making his group into some sort of harmless Catholic party.

Make no mistake: you cannot be a Fascist without being an enemy to civilised humanity, for that is what Fascism is about. And at a time when Fascists poll 13% in France, and 15% in my own country (Italy), nothing could possibly be less welcome than this sort of whitewash of hideous crimes – and Degrelle's treasonable collaboration.

If art of any sort can be criminal, then this book is criminal. **0**

...BUT WHO KILLED THEM AND WHY?
UKRAINIAN PARTISANS. AS THE RUSSIANS WERE PUSHED OUT IN 1941, THEY ASSASSINATED UKRAINAIN NATIONALISTS. THEN THE NATIONALISTS KILLED ALL THE COMMUNISTS THEY COULD GET THEIR HANDS ON
NOW THAT THE COMMUNISTS ARE BACK, THEY'RE KILLING NATIONALISTS AGAIN. AND SO IT GOES...
DON COSSACKS KILLING RUSSIANS. RUSSIANS ARE KILLING ESTONIANS AND LATVIANS. NATIONALIST BYELORUSSIANS ARE KILLING COMMUNIST BYELORUSSIANS. AND HIMMLER'S ACTION GROUPS ARE OUT KILLING JEWS.
ALL-IN-ALL, IT'S A LOT OF KILLING

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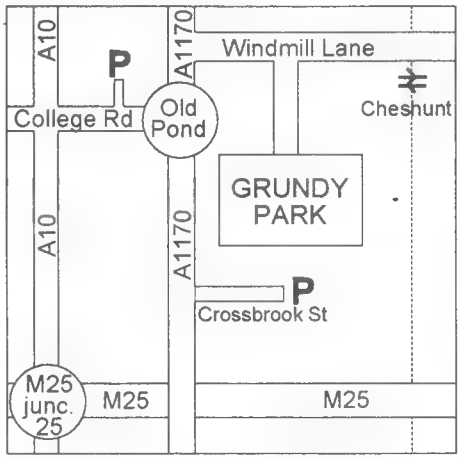

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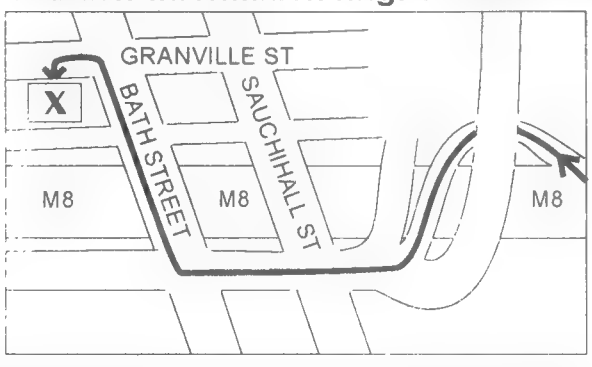

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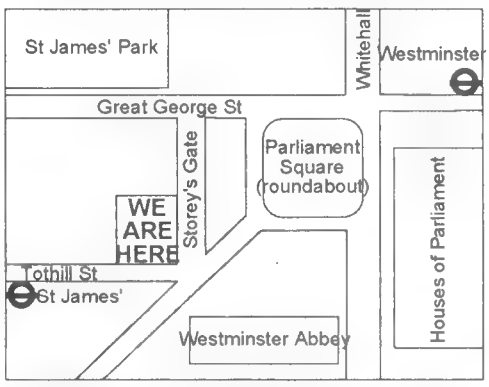

SAT 7TH FEBRUARY
18TH APRIL 6TH JUNE

MOVERS AND SHAKERS

The latest news, views and rumours in our ever-popular overview of the hits, misses, prices, projects and people making comics news. Reported by the mysterious and controversial team of investigative diggers and delvers known to the world only as ITMA.

Claremont at Marvel

THE rumours have persisted, and finally appear to have been verified. Chris Claremont has returned to Marvel Comics as a vice president and editorial director.

It is believed that Claremont will become an editorial consultant (similar to the role recently accepted by Mark Waid), possibly to the X-line of titles. It was during Claremont's long spell as writer of **The Uncanny X-Men** that the title developed into the best-selling comic that it remains to this day.

Jumping in at the deep end, Claremont will be writing **Wolverine** #125. According to assistant X-editor Jason Liebig, Claremont will join regular penciller Leinil Francis Yu for the double-sized anniversary issue, to set in motion events which will alter the face of the mutant landscape for years to come.

X-rated WildStorm?

WILDSTORM has announced that Jim Lee's new series **Divine Right: The Adventures of Max Faraday** has been a huge success and has sold out of every available edition, including foreign language copies.

But instead of simply producing second editions or a reprint trade paperback, WildStorm is offering a collected edition of issues #1 and 2 in January with a slight tweak...

The collected edition will be rated R (the US equivalent to the UK's BBFC 18 rating). According to a WildStorm spokesperson, "The characters' dialogue will more closely approximate the way real people would talk in these situations."

It is rumoured that WildStorm will closely monitor the sales of the "mature readers" **Divine Right** and, if sufficient, there could be a spate of R-rated collections.

Not so divine

THE SCOURGE of comic readers the world over is making its way back into your lives... The speculator is back – but he may be a little more calculating, and won't want to get his fingers burned this time around.

While Image Comics and WildStorm congratulate themselves on selling out of Jim Lee's **Divine Right: The Adventures of Max Faraday** on a retail level, comic dealers in this country know there is a healthy quantity of the comic still available.

Divine Right had an estimated print run of about 75,000 copies (nearly 100,000 if you include overprints) small fry for a comic by Jim Lee, whose **X-Men** #1 sold 8.2 million copies.

Many shop owners reported bulk buying of the first two issues, with some customers buying five or more copies. Canny retailers then pulled the remaining copies from the shelves, ensuring that late arrivals pay premium prices for the Image title, despite there being no grounds for charging more than the $2.50 cover price.

One thing is clear, retail sell-through of the title in the USA has been generally disappointing. Retailers who ordered high have struggled to sell out.

One (obviously cynical) East Coast comic store owner commented, "WildStorm can say what they like, this comic is a dog and anybody buying in bulk wants their heads examining. This isn't going to be a hot book, even if they put real dialogue and naked breasts in the R-rated edition!"

Ever get the impression he grossly over-ordered and got stuck with copies? Or is he just a natural sweetheart?

X-plans on hold

PLANNED from Marvel's X-offices in the new year will be more about the identity of the mysterious Bastion in the unlikely team-up of **Cable and Machine Man '98**.

Set for a March release, it is written by Michael Higgins and drawn by one-time **X-Men** fan fave Rick Leonardi.

However, our Marvel ITMite also told us that any creative or directional changes to the main X-books which had been planned, have been shelved indefinitely.

Obviously, Chris Claremont's return is having an instant effect!

Charlton revival

BOB LAYTON (former editorial head of Valiant Comics) has revealed that he and Dick Giordano (former editorial head of Charlton and DC Comics) are planning a Charlton revival.

Layton told the press that he and Giordano are currently working on a 6-issue series. He said, "I've always felt that these characters had amazing potential for growth. It is the intent of Joey Cavalieri, Dick and myself to bring these players *out a whole new door* while keeping the original spirit of the characters alive.

Layton said he expects the DC project to be scheduled for summer '98. "The mini-series will feature Captain Atom, Blue Beetle, a revamped Nightshade, a totally new Peacemaker, the Question, Sarge Steel, and the original Judomaster.

"The JLA will also be featured, largely in the series' conclusion," he added. "The Blue Beetle will get all-new hardware upgrades, including a new Bug. There will be a few costume revamps for Nightshade, Peacemaker, Judomaster and Captain Atom."

Mini-Marvels

A FEW new Marvel projects for you to save up for...

● Dan Jurgens is the writer of an **Iron Fist** limited series set for May, 1998. The project has not been assigned an artist, but it is believed that prospective candidates include Patrick Oliffe, Frank Teran and even John Byrne.

● **Deathlok** is returning in 1998, but in a dramatically altered form. The plan is to revamp the character and change his origin.

● **Nick Fury/Agent 13** is the working title of a two-issue series tentatively scheduled to begin in March, 1998. Written by Terry (**X-Man**) Kavanagh and pencilled by Ramon (**Superboy**) Bernardo, the series presumes Nick Fury is alive and well and focuses on where he's been, why he's been there, and what he's been doing.

● Not to be confused with the J.M. DeMatteis and Michael Zulli one-shot of the same name, Longshot will be making an appearance in another one-shot. This time by (newcomer?) Brian K. Vaughan and Pete (**Excalibur**) Woods.

The story pits Longshot against the Kingpin and, while it will have no link with the DeMatteis/Zulli title, this bookshelf format special will clear up what happened to the lucky guy's relationship with the X-Men's Dazzler.

● **Sunset Riders Sunset: The Last Ride of the Marvel Western Heroes** is a series planned for the summer of '98 by John Ostrander, featuring most of Marvel's western heroes late in their lives, as the Wild West era draws to a close.

Lucky that Mike Fleischer isn't writing it or he'd have them all stuffed!

● Anyone remember **Seeker 3000**? Well, Dan Abnett and Andrew Currie do and they're working on a continuing series based on the only outing of the SF story, back in **Marvel Premiere** #41.

The Seeker of the title is a spaceship holding the last members of the human race. They are in search of a new home, as Earth is no longer an option.

● The *Strange Tales* imprint may well be joined by a **Strange Tales** comic in 1998. The title would be a horror anthology with Doctor

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Strange as the comic's host. A number of writers and artists have been approached and there is talk that it might be produced as a black and white series.

Marvel expansion

VARIOUS sources at Marvel have suggested that the company is considering three new titles featuring Captain America, The Avengers and the Hulk.

While nothing official has been announced regarding either **The Avengers** or **The Hulk**, Mark Waid has said that he and Andy Kubert are leaving **Ka-Zar** with issue #14, spelling doom for that title. They're leaving to launch a new series called **Captain America: Sentinel of Liberty**, a **Legends of the Dark Knight** type comic which will be co-plotted by **Captain America** artist Ron Garney.

Movers & Shakers' Marvel ITMite confirmed the rumour, saying, "Matt Idelson is overseeing the projects and it seems all the titles will feature the same kind of format; tales that stand alone and don't necessarily have any bearing on the rest of the Marvel Universe."

He had no information on the projected **Hulk** or **Avengers** titles, but concluded, "If Waid is involved, then David and Busiek won't be too far behind..."

Ennis in the works

WITH old characters rapidly being snapped up for revival by writers at both DC and Marvel, Garth Ennis has landed a doozy.

He's set to produce a two-issue Enemy Ace series for Vertigo, in which the old Hammer of Hell (the arrogant little Fokker) apparently survived WWI and, by the second shindig, was in his early 40s.

Ennis is using the Russian Front as a backdrop for the first issue, to be drawn by the under-rated ex-**Lobo** artist Christian Alamy.

The second issue will set von-Hammer against B-52 bombers, in a story drawn by the great Russ Heath.

Ross is boss or dross?

WITH THE December issue of **Wizard** including an exclusive comic book, **Future Visions of the Marvel Universe** featuring new artwork by Alex Ross, the rumour mills have started grinding.

The comic features Ross's interpretation of Marvel heroes from an alternative timeline, such as a "bloodied but unbowed" Captain America, a fat retired Spider-Man and Thor, the Goddess of Thunder.

Although unconfirmed, suggestions are that this could well be Ross's next big project and a well-timed return to what fans want from him.

His **Uncle Sam** series, written by his untested buddy Steve Darnell, may have been one of the biggest retail hits in Vertigo's history, but sell-through has been very poor with unsolds gathering dust.

The main complaint seems to be that it's pretty boring, recounting American embarrassments across the ages, with no real resolution, just a "telling off" kind of book.

If Alex Ross's next project isn't a few extra pages for a new edition of **Kingdom Come** and is indeed his vision of an alternate Marvel, he will have a guaranteed hit on his hands!

Topps hit bottom

ALONG with almost every other member of its editorial staff, the former Marvel and Epic editor who replaced Jim Salicrap at Topps Comics, Rene Witterstatter, is no longer in work.

With the strangest of timing, Topps, which has just announced its intention to expand its line, let all but two people go, leaving Dwight Zimmerman and Charlie W as the sole remaining editorial staff.

Unsurprisingly, Witterstatter hasn't been too kind to her ex-bosses saying they had been "bombarding comic stores with below standard material and only appearing to be worrying about the quality of their covers."

With Topps having lost the licence, **Jackie Chan: Spartan X** is moving to Image as a March-launching six-issue series written and drawn by Michael (**Micronauts**) Golden, who had been slated to work on the series for Topps.

But with Chan never managing to break into the big league, and having only a cult status in the States, the writer/artist may need a Golden touch to make it work for the Big I.

The $1 million variant

DAVE (Oo-er!) Elliott, editor-in-chief of **Penthouse Comix**, has come up with a new first for Image Comics... the million dollar variant cover edition!

Naturally, it's a publicity gimmick. But what isn't these days?

The scam is that a million dollars is the highest price ever placed on a comic book and, as Elliott quips, "For some bizarre reason, I wanted to produce a comic that would instantly be worth less than cover price. Instead of seeing rows upon rows of variant covers all marked up in price, I wanted to see one marked down."

Hence, if a $1m comic is sold for anything less, it's marked down!

Fortunately, Elliott is a better writer than a manipulator, so his **Sharky** title for Image promises to be much more fun.

The variant, which will exist, will be available only through stores which Elliott and artist Alex Horley visit as part of their January launch blitz for the $2.50 bi-monthly title.

Elliott did suggest we take 25 copies for a competition, so we could cover mention "$25 million of prizes to be won", but we didn't think you'd fall for that!

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The European Movement, Britain's leading pro-European campaigning organisation, is looking for a comic book artist (any style will be considered, but cartoony or Love and Rockets-style will probably be preferred) to work on a one-shot cartoon book, aimed at the general public, explaining the single European currency. Writing will be done by European Movement staff - so no knowledge of the euro is necessary.

The 40 page black and white booklet (with colour cover) would have an intended print run of about 100,000 and would be distributed free throughout the UK in the Spring and Summer of next year. The publication would seek to explain the benefits of the euro in clear and simple terms.

The successful applicant will be of professional standard with an ability to hit deadlines and to contribute imaginatively to the design concepts. Interviews will take place in January. Fees will be by negotiation based on experience.

Please send a covering letter, CV and photocopied examples of your work (published or unpublished) to: Mark Littlewood, European Movement, Dean Bradley House, 52 Horseferry Road, London, SW1P 2AF. Further details about the European Movement and the single currency are available on request.

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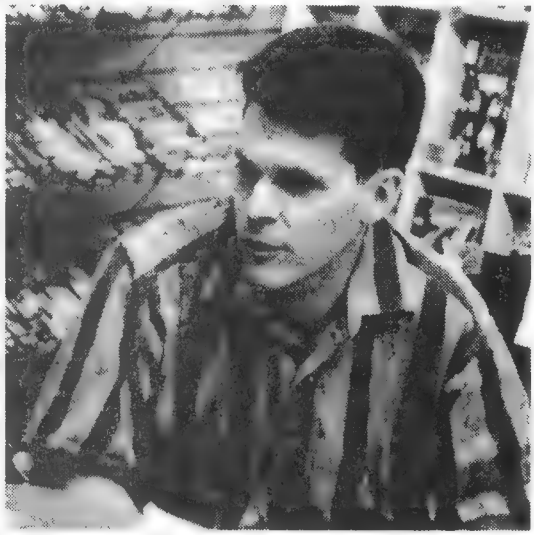
THE MARVEL MEN! This month's Star Pic: The original **Marvelman** team of Garry *("I could have finished another page instead of sitting here")* Leach and Alan *("If I get my hands on that editor...")* Moore. Snapped back in '83 by £20 prizewinner *Dave Wiggins of Stratford, London.*

AND THE WINNER IS... Trina Robbins, with the Friends of Lulu award for her **Great Women Superheroes** book. *Photo by Steve Leialoha*



NOT A HATE-FUL BONE IN HIS BODY! Writer/artist Peter Bagge in a really nice shirt. *Photo by Tamara Rafkin.*

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w/s	= wholesale available	CoBRA	= Comic Book Retailers' mail order protection scheme
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■ **Silver Acre Comics**, PO Box 114, Chester CH 4WQ (s-wants, cc) 01244 300 165

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Comics from the 1970s to date: Bronze Age-Marvel Age-Lead Age up to Platinum Age-Gimmick Age-Image Age. Historians will doubtless eventually decide on a name.

■ **Comics Warehouse**, PO Box 600, 8 Galliford Road, Maldon, Essex CM9 7XD (w/s, cat, cc, CoBRA) 01621 850351

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■ **ACE Comics**, 1 Headgate Buildings, St Johns St, Colchester, Essex CO2 7AD (wants, cat, CoBRA, cc) 01206 561912

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■ **Peachy-Keen Mail Order**, 88 High Street, Wrestlingworth, Sandy, Beds SG19 2EJ (s-cat, CoBRA, wants) 01767 631384

■ **Red Hot Comics**, The Warehouse, Block D Unit 7, Glenwood Business Park, Glenwood Place, Glasgow G45 9UH (CoBRA, s-wants, sae, dis) ph/fax: 0141-630 0049

■ **Time Zone**, 12 Fish Street, Shrewsbury, Shropshire SY1 1UR (dis, cat, wants) 01743 365192

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■ **Comic Biz**, PO Box 7041, London N12 9NF (CoBRA, cc, ash, s&n) 0181-446 3464

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The popularity of old British comics continues to increase as more dealers expand into this area. The following specialise in such titles.

■ **Comic Biz**, PO Box 7041, London N12 9NF (wants, CoBRA, cc, cat) 0181 446 3464

■ **Conquistador Comic Art Mail Order**, 158 Kent House Rd, Beckenham, Kent BR3 1JY (wants, CoBRA, cat, cc) 0181-659 9714

■ **Ken Harman Old Comics & Pulps** (wants; call for details) 0181 771 8756

■ **Weird Fantasy**, 19 Decoy Road, Ormesby, Gt Yarmouth, Norfolk NR29 3LG (s-cat, s-wants, comics/annuals specialist)

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■ **Beyond Comics & Books**, 76 Harlescott Road, Nunhead, London SE15 3BZ (s-cat, s-wants, sae, CoBRA) tel/fax 0171 564 4213

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■ **Discount Trading Cards**, 3 Waterford Ave, Romiley, Stockport SK6 4HL (w/s dis cat, wants CoBRA member) e-mail Cardguys@compuserve.com tel/fax: 0161 427 1867

■ **MTCC Trading Cards**, c/o In Retrospect, 107-109 Orpington High St, Orpington, Kent BR6 0LG. (w/s dis s-wants cc) 01689 835700

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■ **Off World: The Sci-Fi Store**, Unit 20, Romford Shopping Halls, Market Place, Romford, Essex RM1 3AT. (specialists in Trek, Star Wars & s-f collectables) 01708 765633

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■ **Mighty World of Comicana**, 237 Shaftesbury Avenue, London WC2 (dis, CoBRA, cc) 0171-836 5630

ART & REFERENCE

Comics history reference magazines & books (ref) plus art books (art) and newspaper strip compilations (strip).

■ **Conquistador Comic Art Mail Order**, 158 Kent House Rd, Beckenham, Kent BR3 1JY (wants, CoBRA, ref, art, strip, cat, cc) 0181-659 9714

MANGA TITLES

English language translations and Japanese-style American comics.

■ **Comics Unlimited**, 4 Clair St, Lime St, Bedford MK40 1NH (cat, s-wants, CoBRA, cc) 01234 365522

■ **United Publications**, 85 Croydon Road, Keston, Kent BR2 8HU Tel: 0181 325 9507. Web page: www.lupin.demon.co.uk (ind, back, cat, wants, cc)

ALTERNATIVE & BIOG

The following carry an extensive range of biographical and slice-of-life titles (Fantagraphics, Maus, Crumb, Pekar, etc)

■ **Gosh! Strips by Mail**, 39 Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3PH 0171 636 1011

■ **Knockabout Comics**, 10 Acklam Road, London W10 5QZ (w/s, s-cat, cc) 0181 969 2945 (fax: 0181 968 7614)

■ **Page 45**, 9 Market Street, Nottingham NG1 6HY. 0115 9508045

ORIGINAL ART

With artists having their originals returned by publishers, an increasing number of pages are now being made available.

■ **Conquistador Comic Art Mail Order**, 158 Kent House Road, Beckenham, Kent BR3 1JY (wants, CoBRA, cat, cc) 0181-659 9714

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The following companies organise comics, card and fantasy film/tv events across Britain. Individual locations detailed in brackets.

■ **M&M Marts**, 58 Canada Rd, Heath, Cardiff CF4 3BY (Bristol, Cardiff, Gloucester, Swindon, Weymouth) 0181 367 5102

■ **Made in Heaven**, 19 Broughton Rd, Biggar ML12 6AN (Memorabilia shows: NEC Brimingham and Glasgow) 01899 221622

■ **Showmasters International**, 81 Raglan Ave., Waltham Cross, Herts EN8 8DD (Cheshunt, London, Maidstone, Milton Keynes) http://www.starweb.co.uk 01992 637135

■ **Zephyr Marts**, PO Box 6, Liscard, Wallasey, Merseyside L45 4SJ (Coventry, Liverpool, London) http://www.ntof.dembn.co.uk/comicmart/index.html 0151 638 1502

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LETTERS

Comics International, 8 Trinity Road, London N2 8JJ

Byrned fingers

Huw J. Davies
Selah Press, London

REGARDING Fabio P. Barbieri's letter (**CI** #87), I join wholeheartedly with him in singing the praises of Jack Kirby, the father of modern day comic art.

But that does not mean that we should downplay the roles of other creators, one of the most prominent of whom is John Byrne.

Whatever Mr Barbieri may think, Byrne is not only a fan favourite, but an industry favourite as well; hence the massive workload he always has.

I doubt that he would be particularly bothered by Mr Barbieri's criticism, which reeks of jealousy. In fact, having seen Mr Barbieri's own comic work, I think that he ought to concentrate more on self-criticism, and leave the comics for the professionals to do.

Maybe then he'll realise the amount of blood, sweat and hard work it takes to produce a comic book of the calibre for which Mr Byrne is known.

Right to review

Fabio P Barbieri
33 Brewster Road, Leyton,
London E10

JOE Gentile's letter (**CI** #88) did not particularly surprise me. A couple of years ago, one of this country's leading cartoonists started shouting at me at UKCAC because I'd given him a couple of negative reviews.

Nobody likes to be attacked in print; I understand that. But Mr Gentile fails to understand the purpose of the **CI** reviews. Their format precludes any elaborate analysis, and they are not intended for the professionals, but rather for the ordinary fans.

They are only meant to tell them one of two things: "read", or "don't read". Mr Gentile seems unhappy not to be told in detail how I think he might improve his writing, to which I answer that even if I thought he would listen to me, and even if I thought that I could say anything useful, **CI** would not be the right place for it.

I speak as an ordinary reader. I bought at least three of his Moonstone comics with my own money. I didn't like them, and it is my right as a paying customer to say so. I'm sorry I ruffled Mr Gentile's feathers, but my estimate of his writing ability is poor.

In Sarah Bolesworth's *Media File* column, I heartily enjoyed her attack on the BBC's *Money Programme* item on the Marvel crisis. But is she aware that *The Money Programme* always does that sort of thing?

As I write, an item about Italy goes on about how tradition-bound we Italians are, and gives as evidence a pizza restaurant – in Florence! And with Venetian background music, to boot!

For those who don't know, pizza is a Neapolitan dish, and has nothing to do with Florence – tradition indeed! Typical of Florence is the T-bone steak, or "Fiorentina".

Evidently the *Money Programme's* editorial team likes pandering to the tabloid mentality, and that being the case, its pitiful treatment of Marvel and comics is hardly surprising.

Verdi or The Verve?

Joe Legracni,
Highgate, London

I AGREE with Joe Gentile (*Letters*, **CI** #88) that a reviewer should not just dismiss a work outright without some sort of explanation: inferior artwork, derivative storyline, one dimensional characterisation, whatever. I know the magazine insists on brevity, but the above additions adding only two to three words would hardly have gone over any editorial limit!

Critics in general have an inordinate amount of influence and power, and owe it to their readers to give a fair appraisal of any work based on its merits, and untainted by personal preference or bias. If someone prefers the Vertigo line, for instance, is he then the right person to review **Witchblade** or **Babe**? I think not. It's the rare music critic who would cover both Verdi and The Verve, after all.

Too often, it seems, reviewers project their own biases onto what they're reviewing, and I wonder if Mr Barbieri and some of your other reviewers might be guilty of such?

Reviews or Previews?

Gareth Tilley, 7 Fyfield Road,
Oxford OX2 9QA

I THINK **Comics International** is an excellent magazine. But I noticed in *Letters* recently that someone said the *Advance Listings* part of the magazine was a waste of space as the same could be found in **Previews**.

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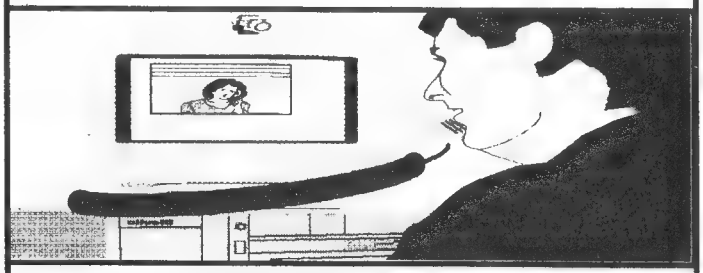

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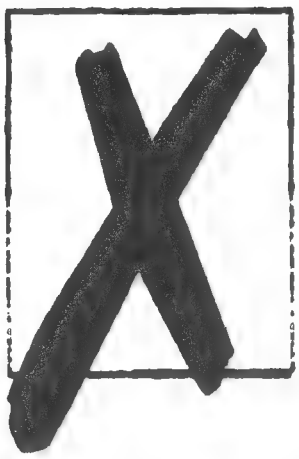

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ASA

LETTERS EXTRA

Previously published views on the relative merits of humour in comics (or is that tautologous) have elicited a response second only to our 1992 "Do We Need A Price Guide?" debate. As such, some of the more thought-provoking of the current crop follow.

A fandom fatwah

Tom Lennon, 5 The Cedars
90 Lichfield Road, Four Oaks
Sutton Coldfield B74 2SY

ALAN Benson, you are so right (*Letters*, **CI** #88). Where others bemoan the state of the industry, only you have the courage to speak for us all. You have rooted out an enemy who, like a vile, cancerous thing, has been gnawing away at the very heart of our medium.

You *Speak For Fandom*, and *Fandom Listens*. You rightly argue that humorous, 'cartoony' comics are quaint artefacts from less sophisticated times – the 'silent movies' of our medium.

No right-thinking member of fandom could argue with this, and you are prepared to take this diagnosis to its logical conclusion, that 'humour' comics are having a negative impact on the industry as a whole, undermining the medium's self-respect and position in the marketplace.

When you look at the history of comics, it becomes apparent that your bold interpretation – which is nothing short of sequential-Darwinism – is the only theory that makes sense. In the early days, the primordial 'funnies' were all the rage. Through a process of natural selection (what I call 'survival of the seriousnest') mainstream comics soon abandoned stylish simplicity and disingenuous rib-ticklers in favour of the 'modern style': intellectually challenging and Proportionally Correct.

But as you know, Alan, some people will always refuse to face the facts. There will always be non-believers. Even Darwin himself had to contend with the scorn of the Creationists.

As you yourself have witnessed, there are those who adamantly refute the scientific evidence, believing there is something of merit to be found in 'The Funnies'. They are wrong. You know this, I know this, but how are we to teach them the error of their ways?

What makes our task more difficult is the fact these people are all determined to keep this generic throwback alive. As you noted, all your critics work within the 'cartoony' genre.

They have a vested interest. This suggests to me the existence of a shadowy humour-comics cabal, hell-bent on undoing your valuable work.

These smooth-talking charlatans have countered your argument with spurious 'evidence' of their own.

They claim, for instance, that 'humour' comics outsell 'proper' comics in the non-fandom marketplace. How very convenient. Of course, what they fail to mention is the fact that many of these 'humour' comics are printed and promoted by *book* publishers. Makes you think...

To your credit, you have nobly advised them on a quick-fix route to redemption: they should learn to WRITE PROPERLY and DRAW PROPERLY. But I suspect they will reject your advances. What then?

At any other time, perhaps tolerance would be the answer. But these are extreme times. Our industry is in the grip of something awful that threatens its very existence. Tolerance is not an option.

What I propose, Alan, is nothing less than a fandom fatwah. The comic-buying public must be taught to despise those heretics who buy these books. Retailers will be encouraged to 'shop' them.

Our efforts will culminate at next year's UKCAC, with a public stoning of these heretics.

Or perhaps we could lock them in cages and prod them with sharpened bamboo sticks.

Yes, sticks would be good.

And when we're finished with the humorists, we'll round up the satirists.

Those ironic smart-arses have long had it coming to them...

Comics lose the plot

Peter Ashton,
Guild Box 123, Edgbaston
Birmingham B15 2TU
E-mail: pca522@bham.ac.uk

THE cartoony style (Alan Benson, *Letters*, **CI** #88) is pretty much intrinsic to what makes comics what they are. The ability to communicate emotions, desires, and feelings through four or five lines and some shading is a skill which comic artists aspire to.

Manga artists use this to great effect, especially when transposed against a realistic background. The cartooning gives the work life, makes if flow, and removes it from the static realism of a photo or painting.

The most sophisticated comic will have an element of cartooning in it: Dave McKean's **Cages**, Jim Woodring's **Frank**, Dave Sim's **Cerebus**, even **The Sandman.**

Nor are humour comics just for kids. **Groo** is a humour comic, and with all its socio-political commentary, is hardly just for kids.

And just because a comic is drawn in a cartoony style does not automatically mean it's going to be funny. Drawing a sad, tragic comic in the simple **Whizzer and Chips** style can be drastically effective in the right hands.

Yes, comics have matured and discovered new ways of telling stories, but without understanding what it is about these 'kiddie comics' that made them work, comics are in danger of losing the plot completely.

Dave King and Lew Stringer (*Letters,* **CI** #85-86) are talented cartoonists trapped between a rock (no decent outlet for their work) and a hard place (the narrow minded and ill-educated views of people who call themselves comics fans when they don't understand the very basis of how they work).

I think they have every right to moan about it.

No laughter aloud!

Andrew Spencer
108 Barford Road, Longview, Huyton, Merseyside L36 8DQ

HEY, EVERYBODY, I've found another Elitist! Mister Alan Benson, come on down! **Bone** a kids book? **Spumco Comics?** Mustn't read that, too childish, and heaven forbid I might think that the Bongo Comics line is actually an intelligent study of urban social structure thinly disguised as a 'cartoon book'.

You may be pleased to know the forthcoming **Calvin & Hobbes** anthology is to be Bill Watterson's last book. But I, for one, consider it to be a tribute to the man's talents as the creator of a thought provoking view of life as seen through the eyes of a six-year old.

Taking **Calvin & Hobbes** as an example, your dislike seems to stem from three beliefs:

The artwork is cartoony and childlike.

No. The artwork is brilliant! In one book alone, Watterson walks us through many different ways of using sequentiality, composition, and line art. But if it doesn't have unchanging Gothic artwork, you probably wouldn't look at it. Yet Jill Thompson's work shows all the same qualities as Watterson's. Sometimes the world needs the unfettered guidance of a simple but strategically placed line.

There is no room for story or character development .

That's the point! Not only are these books designed to make you laugh, but they often make a point as well. If the character changed, then the point would change, and you would then lose what is so beloved about the books (ie, a sense of innocence, which is like a breath of fresh air after wading through some of today's stuff).

People actually laugh at something designed to be humorous.

H'mm. I think that maybe you have little in the way of a sense of humour, because anyone would be hard pushed not to find something that would raise a giggle in **Calvin & Hobbes**.

There is a broad brand of strip comics out there, and certainly something for everyone if they look. But anyone who is *that* critical of something designed specifically to be funny is certainly missing the point!

Viz a Viz

Dave King, Leicester

ALAN Benson's letter (**CI** #88) provided me with a great deal of amusement (maybe he ought to be writing humour comics!).

Alan, not only have you entirely missed the point of my letter, but your inability to appreciate different approaches and subject matters within the comics industry shows you to be exactly the kind of Comics Fascist I was referring to!

Your blinkered, revisionist view of the history of comics was one of the funniest pieces of nonsense I've ever read.

"When comics started... with Superman"? Of course you mean when *superhero* comics started (the only kind of comics to which you appear to attach artistic relevance or entertainment value).

Perhaps you might want to consider the fact that superhero comics may never have even appeared had it not been for... HUMOUR COMICS!

Do a little research and you might come across **Ally Sloper** (introduced in 1867), **Comic Cuts** (launched in 1890), or America's **The Yellow Kid** (1895) all of which predate Superman (1938) by more than a few years!

Your assertion that the art in humour strips at the time when Superman appeared was unsophisticated is simply wrong. Have you never seen McCay's **Little Nemo in Slumberland** or Herriman's **Krazy Kat**?

You say that "cartoony comics and humour are only for kids because they are easy to understand". Personally, I would consider that a compliment, and it's a lesson that many of today's superhero comic artists ought to take on board.

Look at the work of Steve Rude, Russ Manning, Carl Barks, Mike Mignola, Alex Toth, or Alan Davis – they all have the skill to use one line where lesser talents might use 50. Texture, as you put it, should not be confused with genuine storytelling talent.

Furthermore, if humour comics are only for kids, then why are Harvey Kurtzman and **Mad** held in such high regard?

How about Leo Baxendale, Carl Barks, Alfred Bestall, Albert Uderzo, Windsor McCay, Hergé, Hunt Emerson, Matt Groenig, Jeff Smith, or Peter Bagge?

Why do companies like Dark Horse publish titles by artists like Sergio Aragones and Don Martin?

And why do **Calvin and Hobbes** collections continually top the best seller charts?

Why is **Viz** (hardly for children!) the top selling comic in Britain, with a print run more than double that of the top selling US superhero titles?

Alan, you advise me to "learn to draw properly". Perhaps you mean I should learn to draw 'properly' like Rob Liefield, Kelly Jones, or Jack Kirby? Striking artists all, but hardly sticklers for anatomically correct figure work. The point is that their styles work within the context of the material, just as the various humorous art styles work in their own contexts.

Your failure to see all types of comics as one art form baffles me.

You simply cannot run through the history of comics without seeing how the form has progressed as a whole, and that it is impossible to segregate one genre from another.

Good comics should be valued irrespective of whether they feature the work of Charles Vess or Charles Schulz.

No dumb jokes

Fabio P. Barbieri
33 Brewster Road
Leyton, London E10

ALAN Benson's attack on humour comics (*Letters,* **CI** #88) comes as close as anything I have ever read to being literally indefensible.

It could be demolished on any number of grounds: his ignorance of comics history, for instance, or his pathetic belief that Vertigo comics are "more successful" than **Viz** or **Calvin and Hobbes**, or his sad lack of any understanding of drawing. Mr Benson, who despises humour, has made himself a very public butt.

I want to address what I consider to be the central error in his argument: that humour is an inherently inferior genre, unintellectual and facile.

This is simply wrong. Humour is not facile, for a start. Has Mr Benson ever tried to write a funny scene? He seems quite unaware of the constructive intelligence and insight required to raise even the slightest smile. But more importantly, humour is not unintellectual, let alone unintelligent. Quite the contrary: it is a fundamental instrument of intellectual analysis. It is not a coincidence that the most brilliant intellects in history were noted wits, or that Dante put laughter in Paradise, and left grim faces in Hell.

I say this with the most absolute seriousness: you cannot properly know or understand life and reality without humour. To call a person humourless is not only to stamp him as a bore and a party pooper, it is to charge him with a very basic sort of stupidity. Life is funny; existence is absurd.

When you think by what undignified and chancy routes two human beings create a third – and sex has always been one of the biggest jokes in the world – you must be very short of insight or understanding not to smile. And down from that fundamental experience of human life, there is no sphere of existence that cannot or should not be funny. And the grimmest – such as war – are often the funniest.

True, there are things that are not properly understood unless they are seen as loathsome, and there are things that are not properly understood unless they are loved, such as beautiful music.

And yet all these things, loathsome and lovely, good or evil, are also not properly understood unless you can laugh at them. Hitler was loathsome, but he was also a hilarious, absurd creature. Classical music is gorgeous, but the uniforms of orchestral players, and the gestures and grimaces of conductors, are funny. Anyone with no taste for that has no taste for life.

I think Mr Benson is ultimately rather scared. He is terrified of seeming childish and immature, and, under the misapprehension that humour has anything to do with childishness, he is desperate to throw the taint of it as far away from himself as he can. There is no doubt that he succeeds: nobody could possibly charge him with having a sense of humour.

Most astonishingly, Mr Benson shows no understanding at all of his own subject. The best Vertigo writers (and the man they all follow, Alan Moore) have a strong component of humour.

Ellis, Morrison, Milligan, are all quite funny, while Garth Ennis all but survives on a puerile but effective notion of humour.

And how many times, even in the grimmest of Alan Moore items, does a smile turn up?

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Help, I need to make space! Therefore I am forced to sell part of my collection. Valiant, Malibu, early Image, Marvel UK, some DC and many key sets of Marvel. Send an SAE for list to Tony Adkins, 20 Derwent Dr, Oakham, Rutland LE15 6SA.

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Wanted: **Eddy Current** 2; **Transit** 1-5; **Strange Embrace** 4; **Puma Blues** 24-onwards; **Lone Wolf and Cub** 46-onwards; **Faust** 12-onwards; **Godwheel** 3; **Further Adventures of Indiana Jones** 30 32-34. Will pay money or trade some cack. Please contact Justin Bright, 257 Hethersett Close, Newmarket, Suffolk CB8 7AS.

Wanted: **Fantastic** (1967-68 Odhams Press) 1-8 12 13 28 40 41 45-47 62 65 70 72 74 78 79 83 84 86 88; **Fantastic Annuals** 1968 1969 1970. Contact David Constable on 0123 478 1251.

Wanted for research in any condition: **Comic Book Marketplace** 1-43 50 (top price paid); Les Daniels' **Five Fabulous Decades of the World's Greatest Comics: Marvel** (even photocopy of certain chapters would help). Also, Atlas one-shots from 1957: **Black Rider Rides Again**, **Cartoon Kids**, **Marvin Mouse**, **A Date With Patsy**, **Hedy Wolfe**, **Nellie the Nurse** 1; **Willie the Wise Guy** and **Dippy Duck**, in genuine high grade. Contact Randall Barlow: 0148 237 4297.

Urgently required (for Christmas pressie!) Marvel reprints: **The Essential Spider-Man** vol 1; **The Essential X-Men** vol 1. Both black and white trade paperbacks. Please help! Contact Sean, 42 Rathmore Park, Raheny, Dublin 5, Republic of Ireland. Telephone 00353 1832 7346.

Wanted: **Tom Puss Comics** (Birn Brothers, 1949) will pay £150; **Panda Comics** (same series, 1949) will pay £100; **Tom Puss in Rhymeland** will pay £100, **Jack & Jill** all colour gift books (edited by A. Mills) will pay £40. Please contact Piet Koudenburg, Cortenhoeve 14, 2411 JM Bodegraven, NL - Netherlands.

Trading cards needed: ***Babylon 5*** Fleer 1995 #10 24 44 69 78 88 102 ***Foil*** 2; spares #11 15-18 21 25 26 28 30 31 36 38 43 45 49 53 59 60 64 70 73 80 83 95 101 105 109 111 ***Space Gallery*** 5, ***Foil*** 7. Contact Gary Henderson on e-mail GHenderson3@compuserve.com

Wanted: original *Dr Who* videos: *Destiny of the Daleks* and *Mawdryn Undead*. Please phone 0178 566 5425 or write to Steve Wightman, 2 Waltonbury Close, Walton-on-the-Hill, Stafford ST17 0LP.

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Wanted: **The A-Team** (Marvel); **Incomplete Death's Head** 9 10 12 (Marvel UK); **Masters of the Universe** (Marvel — Star); **X-Men Archives** (Captain Britain) 1; **Mr T and the T-Force** (Now Comics) 11 onwards; **Mr T and the T-Force Annual** (Now) 1 onwards; any *A-Team* related comics, books, merchandise. Write with details to Chris Bunting, Goss Hall, Ash-over, Chesterfield, Derbyshire S45 0JN.

Wanted: Astro City pin (as advertised in vol 1). Also any mags, fanzines, prints, etc relating to the series. Please contact Paul, 31 Wardley Avenue, Worsley, Manchester M28 0HP. Telephone: 0161 281 9472.

Wanted: any Skywald horror-mood comics (**Psycho**, **Nightmare** and **Scream**). Please contact John Gallagher on 0161 494 8650.

Wanted urgently: **Essential Spider-Man** vol 1; **Marvel Tales** 137-190. Swap for my **JLA** 1-12 (3rd series) or pay fair cash price for. Also: **Batman** (London Editions magazines) and any **Spider-Man Comics Weekly**. All letters answered. Contact Anthony Sheeran, 11 Bredbury Road, Fallowfield, Manchester M14 7AG.

English 1950s comics wanted: **Space Adventures**, **Spaceman**, **Whiz**, **Master**, **Nyoka**, **Captain Marvel**, **Black Magic**, **Space Commando**, **Marvelman**, **Planet**, **Crimson Comet**, **Captain Valiant**, **Swift Morgan**, **Roy Carson**, **Mystery in Space**, **Marvel Family**, **Speed Kings**, **Super Thriller**, **Strange Worlds** and similar 1940s/1950s items. Please contact Mike Morley, 5 Crompton Avenue, Sprotboro Road, Doncaster DN5 8ED.

Wanted: **Elric** 0, **Friends of the Maxx** 3; **Tenth** 2 vol 2 and desperately wanted, any **Fighting Fantasy** gamebooks or related merchandise. Please contact Gareth Tilley, 7 Fyfield Road, Oxford OX2 9QA.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Fanzine and small press titles must not be offered for sale before being printed. To verify publication, samples should be sent with advertising copy.

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Dredd fans, if you've seen the adverts for the **Class of '79** over the last few months but haven't written, now's the time. Send an A5 SAE for our free preview of what's to come in '98 to, W. R. Logan, 6 Crompton Avenue, Bidford-on-Avon, Nr Alcester, Warwickshire B50 4DG.

Artist, highly talented, 26, seeks comic book company or space agency in America which needs staff artist. Inker/penciller/colourist – I can do all three. Reply to: Sohail, 25 Quainton Street, London NW10 0BG, UK. Tel: 011 44 181 450 7188.

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Desperately seeking Alan Hewetson writer/editor of the Skywald horror-mood comics (**Psycho**, **Nightmare** and **Scream**). Anyone with information, please contact John Gallagher on 0161 494 8650 (outside UK +44 161 494 8650).

Pro-standard pencillers sought to collaborate with writer and inker on various projects for submission to US publications. All art samples will be returned, all enquiries replied to, guaranteed. Contact Andy, 284 Frimley Road, Camberley, Surrey GU15 2QH. (Neil Bushnell and Gordon, if you read this, drop me a line.)

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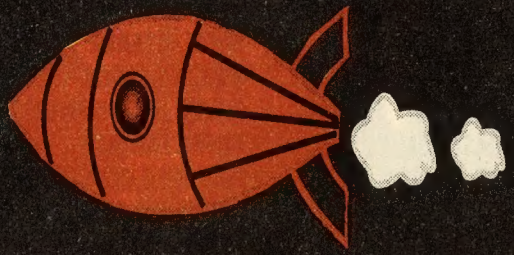

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NEXT SHOW: SUNDAY 1ST MARCH

EVENTS GUIDE

An at-a-glance guide, this listing gives the dates and locations of all forthcoming events advertised in this issue. It includes a bracketed number after each entry noting the page where the advertisement with the event's full details appears.

DECEMBER

21/12 **CARDIFF:** Comic, Card & SF Mart with guest Dave Prowse, The Angel Hotel, Westgate Street, Cardiff, Wales ..... (p 69)
27/12 **LIVERPOOL:** Comic, Card & Related Mart , Bluecoat Chambers ..... (p 89)

JANUARY

4/1 **LONDON:** Comicbook Marketplace, Camden Centre, Bidborough Street ..... (p 90)
4/1 **LONDON:** SF, Cult TV & Card Fair with guests, Lee Valley Leisure Centre, Meridian Way, London N9 ..... (p 73)
10/1 **LEEDS:** Comic Mart & Card Show, Metropolitan University, Brunswick Hall, Merrion Way, Leeds. ..... (p 67)
11/1 **CHESHUNT:** Comic, Sci-Fi & Film Fair, Grundy Park Leisure Centre, Windmill Lane, Cheshunt, Herts ..... (p 78)
17/1 **BIRMINGHAM:** Comic Mart & Card Show, Church Centre, Carrs Lane. ..... (p 67)
18/1 **LONDON:** Card Mart, Camden Centre, Bidborough Street ..... (p 87)
18/1 **LONDON:** Comic, Card & Related Mart, TUC Congress Centre, 23-28 Great Russell Street, London ..... (p 91)
24/1 **MANCHESTER:** Comic Mart & Card Show, Sachas Hotel, Tibb Street, Piccadilly, Manchester ..... (p 67)
25/1 **LIVERPOOL:** Comic Mart & Card Show, Gladstone Hotel, Lord Nelson Street, Liverpool ..... (p 67)
31/1 **GLASGOW:** Comic, Sci-Fi & Film Fair, The Mitchell Theatre, Granville St ... (p 78)
31/1 **NEWCASTLE:** Comic Mart & Card Show, University of Northumbria, Students' Union Ballroom, Sandyford Road ..... (p 67)
31/1 **SWINDON:** Comic, Card & SF Mart, Oasis Leisure Centre, North Star Avenue, Swindon ..... (p 69)

FEBRUARY

1/2 **LONDON:** The National Comicbook Marketplace & Card Mart, The Royal National Hotel, Bedford Way, London ..... (p 37)
7/2 **GLOUCESTER:** Comic, Card & Sci-Fi Mart, Gloucester Leisure Centre, Bruton Way, Gloucester ..... (p 69)
7/2 **LONDON:** Comic, Sci-Fi & Film Fair, Westminster Central Hall, Storey's Gate, London ..... (p 78)
7/2 **NOTTINGHAM:** Comic Mart & Card Show, Victoria Leisure Centre, Gedling Street, Nottingham ..... (p 67)
8/2 **HULL:** Comic Mart & Card Show, Comfort Friendly Inn, Anlaby Road ..... (p 67)
14/2 **LIVERPOOL:** Comic, Card & Related Mart , Bluecoat Chambers ..... (p 89)
14/2 **SHEFFIELD:** Comic Mart & Card Show, Main Hall, Sheffield Hallam University, Howard Street, Sheffield ..... (p 67)
15/2 **CARDIFF:** Comic, Card & SF Mart, The Angel Hotel, Westgate Street ..... (p 69)
21/2 **LEEDS:** Comic Mart & Card Show, Metropolitan University, Brunswick Hall, Merrion Way, Leeds. ..... (p 67)
28/2 **GLASGOW:** Comic & Card Mart, Hamish Wood Building, Caledonian University, Cowcaddens Road, Glasgow ..... (p 47)
28/2 **SWANSEA:** Comic, Card & Sci-Fi Mart, The Dolphin Hotel, Whitewalls, City Centre, Swansea ..... (p 69)

MARCH

1/3 **CHESHUNT:** Comic, Sci-Fi & Film Fair, Grundy Park Leisure Centre, Windmill Lane, Cheshunt, Herts ..... (p 78)
1/3 **LONDON:** Comicbook Marketplace, Camden Centre, Bidborough Street .. (p 90)
7/3 **BIRMINGHAM:** Comic Mart & Card Show, Church Centre Carrs Lane. ..... (p 67)
8/3 **BRISTOL:** Comic, Card & Sci-Fi Mart, Jurys Hotel, Prince Street ..... (p 69)
8/3 **PETERBOROUGH:** Comic Mart & Card Show, Great Northern Hotel, Station Approach, Peterborough ..... (p 67)
14/3 **MANCHESTER:** Comic Mart & Card Show, Sachas Hotel, Tibb Street, Piccadilly, Manchester ..... (p 67)
15/3 **LIVERPOOL:** Comic Mart & Card Show, Gladstone Hotel, Lord Nelson Street, Liverpool ..... (p 67)
15/3 **LONDON:** Card Mart, Camden Centre, Bidborough Street ..... (p 87)
21/3 **BIRMINGHAM:** 2-day Memorabilia '98 with guests, The NEC ..... (p 17)
21/3 **MANCHESTER:** 2-day UKCAC '98 with guests, The Reynold Building, Umist, Piccadilly, Manchester ..... (p 38)
21/3 **MANCHESTER:** The National Comics Awards, The Western Theatre, Umist, Piccadilly, Manchester ..... (p 21)
28/3 **NEWCASTLE:** Comic Mart & Card Show, University of Northumbria, Students' Union Ballroom, Sandyford Road ..... (p 67)
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